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LADY MACLAIRN,

THE

VICTIM OF VILLANY.

A NOVEL.

IN FOUR VOLUMES.

BY MRS. HUNTER,

OF NORWICH,

AUTHOR OF LETITIA; THE UNEXPECTED LEGACY; THE HISTORY OF THE GRUBTHORPE FAMILY; PALMERSTONE'S LETTERS, &c. &c.

VOL. I.

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INTRODUCTION.

IN presenting the following pages to the Public, I conceive it to be incumbent on me to say, that Miss Cowley's letters to her friend will be found to contain nearly the whole of a narrative, from which, I trust, my readers may draw a lesson of morality, as well as of gratification to that curiosity which a *new Novel* often excites, but sometimes disappoints. My claims to candour are consequently few; for as the Editor, rather than the Author, I beg leave to observe, that with the materials before me, I have balanced, pretty equally as I think, my hopes of my readers' favour, with my fears of their frowns; and I stand chargeable with

no more than an error in judgment, or too much partiality for Miss Cowley's talents, in having preferred her pen to my own.

It is, however, indispensibly necessary, that I should prepare the way for her appearance as a candidate for public notice; and with as much of brevity as of fidelity, do I intend to make my first chapter useful to this purpose, by detailing such particulars of her family, birth, and circumstances of fortune, as are requisite for the better knowledge and illustration of those occurrences which engaged her time and attention, and furnished the principal subjects for her pen.

LADY MACLAIRN,

THE

VICTIM OF VILLANY.

CHAP. I.

MR. COWLEY, father of Miss Cowley, was, at an early age, left an orphan, with an ample inheritance in Jamaica, the place of his birth. He was consigned by the will of his father, who had survived his mother, to the guardianship of a gentleman who resided in London, and who, in his commercial concerns, had for a course of years evinced an integrity, founded on the liberal principles of an enlightened mind and a cultivated understanding. The care of his estate was left in the hands of a friend, not less

no more than an error in judgment, or too much partiality for Miss Cowley's talents, in having preferred her pen to my own.

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attaining the object of his affections, gave to his youthful ardour pursuits far remote from the dangers of dissipation. To conquer the reluctance of Mrs. Dawson, the young lady's mother, to her daughter's marrying him, or any other pretender to her favour, was a trial, not only of his patience and perseverance, but also of her daughter's health and spirits; for she had long since given her heart to young Cowley, and well knew that the only impediment in the way to her union with the man she loved, was the excessive and fond attachment of her mother to her society, and the wish of having no competitor for a heart which she conceived to be made only for herself. The young lady's declining spirits, and the arguments urged by her lover, at length gained a cold consent, to which were annexed conditions that Cowley cheerfully agreed to. These were principally confined to the young couple's residence under her

roof, and a promise, never to hazard a voyage to Jamaica without her concurrence. Satisfied on these essential points, she hastened the nuptials, in order to expedite her removal with her daughter to Bristol Hot-Wells, whither she was ordered by her physician; and entirely regardless of procuring settlements, her daughter being an only child, the party proceeded from the altar to their destined abode at Clifton; where health, peace, and gaiety met the happy pair. Mrs. Dawson's apprehensions for the life of her beloved daughter, had not long subsided before she became alarmed for herself: the honey-moon continued longer than her forbearance; she imagined herself neglected. Fears and explanations were succeeded by altercations, and fits of sullenness and even rudeness to poor Cowley; who, in consideration of his wife's tranquillity, redoubled his attentions to her mother. This tribute of true affection

gained him nothing with Mrs. Dawson, for it unfortunately gave her daughter an opportunity of observing, more than once, that "Mr. Cowley's behaviour to her mother was of itself sufficient to engage her love, her esteem and gratitude."

During the space of three years the amiable wife bore with patience these jealous caprices of her mother; not so acquiescent was the husband: he was weary of the contest, and the tender Marian trembled for her husband's peace and her own future happiness. The death of Mr. Cowley's faithful agent in Jamaica, which happened at this period, rendered a voyage thither indispensible to Mr. Cowley. He explicitly placed before his wife and her mother his intentions to visit his patrimony; and left them to decide whether he was to go unaccompanied by the only person who could solace him in his absence from England.

Mrs. Cowley firmly declared her purpose of going with him, and to every argument and intreaty used by her mother, applied the same answer:—"My duty, my affection, my very life, urge me to undertake a voyage which my husband hazards; and were it round the world I would cheerfully share the dangers with my Cowley." Let it suffice that Mrs. Cowley persevered, and from the hour of her daughter's departure, her mother nourished an irreconcilable hatred to Mr. Cowley; attributing to his cruelty and undue authority the absence of his wife, "who was not permitted to love even her mother, nor that mother to shelter her from his tyrannical temper."

Candour as well as the proofs before me, exact from my pen, however, some qualifications, which will soften down to the weakness of human nature these severe traits in Mrs. Dawson's character; for it would be unjust not to give it more

favourable lineaments, and amongst several, it is proper to distinguish one, namely, her generous cares in sheltering under her roof a young lady, who was left an orphan for more than three years, at the end of which period she married happily. As this act of friendship and benevolence on Mrs. Dawson's part produced a course of active and important duties on the young lady's, and as these are materially connected with my narrative, it must be allowed me to mention more particularly the advantages which had, at this period of my history, accrued to Mrs. Dawson from her kind protection of Miss Otway. Her age, her various talents, and her attractive virtues, had contributed to form Marian Dawson's mind, and to obviate the evils of her mother's unlimited indulgence. Till her marriage with Mr. Hardcastle, to whom she had been engaged before she lost her father, and whom from prudential motives she refus-

ed to marry when deprived of this support, her whole attention had been given to Miss Dawson's education; and although the instructress and the pupil differed not in age more than two or three years, nothing less than the blindest folly could have overlooked the rich recompence which Mrs. Dawson derived from her kindness to Miss Otway: the most perfect friendship and confidence subsisted between the young women. Cowley was the intimate friend of Mr. Hardcastle, though several years younger than himself, and few of Mrs. Dawson's connections doubted of the share which the Hardcastles had taken in the unhappy dissentions caused by Mrs. Dawson's ill-regulated fondness to her child. It is certain, that both Mr. and Mrs. Cowley had the concurrence of these friends in regard to the measures they pursued; and with the most sanguine hopes of succeeding, they both engaged to spare

no pains in reconciling Mrs. Dawson to the temporary absence of her son and daughter, nor in preparing her to expect Mr. Cowley to have an establishment of his own at his return. Faithful to their engagements, they in part effected their purpose. Their attentions soothed the afflicted mother. She found that she was not wholly abandoned; she talked of her poor unhappy child till compassion had subdued resentment, and time had banished tears and bewailings; and Mrs. Dawson again tasted the comforts of health, affluence, and friendship, although still dead to the pleasure of *forgiveness*, probably, because it was less painful to hate Cowley than to reproach herself.

Mr. Hardcastle's succession to his uncle's estate of about five or six hundred pounds per annum, induced a change in his plans of life. He gave up his profession in the law, and retired to his in-

heritance with his lady and child, then an infant. Mrs. Dawson suffered little from this change, for she passed months at a time with them in the country, and enjoyed the variety of the seasons with health, and few regrets beyond her usual topic for discontent. "Seven years a wife without the chance of being a mother," had not been unfrequently adverted to by Mrs. Dawson, as a proof of Mr. Cowley's demerits in the sight of Heaven. "He, that so fervently wished for children! But his wretched temper would have its punishments." Alas! his fond and too eager wishes had most unquestionably their disappointment in the hour of their fruition; for, in consequence of a fever which no skill could overcome, he lost his wife six weeks after she had given him a daughter. Mrs. Dawson sunk under this heavy stroke. Nothing remained but her enmity to Cowley; and in order to gratify this, she made her will

To Rachel Marian Cowley, her granddaughter, she bequeathed all her property; but subjected it to conditions, which sufficiently marked her hatred to the infant's father. In case Mr. Cowley submitted to relinquish the rights of a parent, and to place his daughter under Mr. and Mrs. Hardcastle's care, the child was immediately after her decease to be conveyed to England, and given into their protection. On this condition, she was entitled to the annual interest resulting from the sum which constituted her fortune, and which was vested in the public funds, to the amount of a capital which produced more than six hundred pounds per annum. The father's refusal to concede to these terms, restricted her from the fortune till she was twenty-one, or till she married with the consent of Mr. Hardcastle and the other trustee appointed to this duty. In case of her death before she could claim her fortune, the

whole sum, with its accumulations, was left to Mr. Hardcastle and his family. Satisfied with this disposition of her worldly possessions, she appeared to have recovered her usual health and composure, except when speaking of her grand-child. On these affecting occasions, her only consolation appeared to rise from Mr. and Mrs. Hardcastle's reiterated promises to receive the child, whenever Mr. Cowley should think it proper to claim their kind offices. They repeated this assurance in the most solemn terms, and Mrs. Hardcastle, with ceaseless labour, endeavoured to fix on her mind the persuasion, that Mr. Cowley would think of no one but himself for so precious a charge. Mrs. Dawson was suddenly removed by an apoplectic fit the following winter; and Counsellor Steadman, her executor and trustee, in communicating to Mr. Hardcastle the contents of Mrs. Dawson's last will and testament, was neither surprised

nor offended at the sentiments his old friend so warmly expressed, though they were so opposite to the gratitude usually bestowed even on *contingent* donations; and having informed Mr. Cowley of this event, and its consequences, he left him to determine at his leisure, on the fitness of Mrs. Dawson's arrangements for his daughter's benefit and security.

During this period of time, the unhappy Mr. Cowley was giving the most unequivocal and melancholy proofs to those about him, of the affection he cherished for his amiable and lost Marian. A long and dangerous illness had succeeded to her death, the consequence of his attendance, fatigue, and grief; and when rescued from the grave by the vigour of his constitution, his friends found his mind sunk into the deepest gloom. From this deplorable condition, he was gradually roused by the sight of his infant daughter.

Happily the child was healthy, and had for its preservation an attendant well qualified to supply a mother's cares. Mrs. Cowley, on quitting England, had fortunately secured in the female attendant who accompanied her, more than the talents and fidelity of a domestic. Mrs. Allen was a widow; she had been well instructed in her youth, and matured in wisdom and knowledge by a natural good sense, and the discipline of adversity. The *femme de chambre* was forgotten in the usual friend and companion of the voyage, and Mrs. Cowley introduced Mrs. Allen to her new circle in a manner suitable to her merits. To this excellent woman she in some sort bequeathed her infant, engaging her, in the most affecting terms, to watch over the child till it was safe with Mrs. Hardcastle, who had promised her to be its parent when in England. This request was enforced by Mr. Cowley also; and Mrs. Allen forgot

not her obligations in the performance of her duty. From the time of her lady's death, as she always called Mrs. Cowley, she regularly corresponded with Mrs. Hardcastle; and from her letters to this lady, I have learned to judge both of Mr. Cowley's attachment to his wife and child, and of Mrs. Allen's good sense. I shall transcribe a part of one of the letters she wrote to Mrs. Hardcastle, when the child was something more than three years old: it delineates the condition of a father seeking refuge from sorrow in the indulgence of fondness, the fruits of which are too often found in bitter repentance. After an account of Mr. Cowley's improved health, and incessant demands on her little charge for the cheerfulness he still needed, she thus proceeds: "Judge, my dear Madam, what must be the result of this excessive fondness! what must be the condition of a being, liable to contradiction and disappointment from

the very tenure on which she holds her being, who must never be controuled in her will, whose tears put Mr. Cowley into a fever, and whose infant caprices are laws which no one dare to disobey. Nature, my dear Madam, has formed her for a better purpose, than subduing her father's judgment by her attractive person and irresistible vivacity. But with all the sportive charms of infancy, with, I may say, redundant health and activity, with beauty to dazzle all sober judgment that views her in her happy moments, she cannot impose on me, nor quiet my apprehensions for her future life; for she has passions which need the curb, and those are hourly strengthening. Already she is more despotic with her father than he is with his slaves; and my influence with her depends only on her generous nature. She cannot bear to see me 'grieve,' to use her language: she has been just making her dear Allen '*well.*'

This was the occasion: a young and sweet-tempered negro girl in the house, has been with my concurrence promoted to her nursery; she plays with her, and is docile to my instructions. This, with the singular beauty she possesses, have gained her an interest with me, and I have taught her to read, and the habits of order. Marian was busy in making a cap for her doll this morning, when summoned to romp with her little tyrant. She begged for *a moment*—it was granted; but Marian still plied her needle: a blow on her face was the rebuke her tardiness met with, and the poor girl's tears followed it. No ways softened, 'her dear Missee' cuffed and kicked her, till I interposed, and, with a sorrowful tone, said, 'I must leave you, my child, you will make me sick and sorrowful, for I cannot love you.' The storm was allayed; and taking Marian by the hand, she left me without speaking a single

word. In a short time she returned, leading the poor girl laden with toys and her finery. 'Marian loves me now,' said she, creeping to my knees, 'she has kissed me—will not you? I am sorry. I will be good, if it will make you well;—do smile, only smile once.' Such is the child that claims your forming hand: have pity on her, Madam; use your influence over her father, urge him to perform his duty; every day she remains with him will render your task of love and friendship more difficult."

This letter produced its desired effect; for, some months after its date, the following one appears to have been addressed to Mr. Hardcastle, from Mr. Cowley. As it will serve to ascertain his character, I shall transcribe its contents.—"Your wife has conquered, my dear friend. I have at length summoned up resolution to be a parent and a man. Good God! thou

only knowest the price of the sacrifice to my duty! and thou only canst render it propitious to thy creature! But I will still hope in thy mercies. My child, Hardcastle, has been spared hitherto; she has happily encountered, not only the diseases peculiar to her tender age, but also the small-pox, which she has had, since our last dispatches, in the mildest form, and is now in *perfect health.* To what purpose has she been thus preserved? Not to be the victim of my doating fondness. My promise to her dear mother shall be fulfilled, and whilst it is yet time to save her from a father's weakness. Captain Vernon, who loved her mother, and whose attachment to this child is little less than my own, shall be entrusted with her; and Mrs. Allen will attend her. You may expect to see her with the next Jamaica fleet."

"I have only to observe to you, as I

have done to Counsellor Steadman, that I consider Mrs. Dawson's legacy to my daughter, as totally remote from any calculations of her expences as my child; I shall never interfere with him as to the disposal of the money. I have long since forgotten Mrs. Dawson's weaknesses and prejudices, nor did I need any inducement for my conduct of the nature she supposed. My wife's dying request in regard to her infant, shall be religiously observed; and it is an unspeakable consolation to me to know, that the friend whom she appointed as her substitute, is as willing to engage in the duty as she expected. I shall remit you annually eight hundred per annum for her and Mrs. Allen's maintenance under your roof. You know that this excellent woman is bound by her engagement to her mother to serve her. You know the station she has filled in my house since the death of my wife. Mrs. Hardcastle is prepared to

meet in her a valuable addition to her family: she will not be disappointed; for her modest worth will ensure her a welcome in any abode where virtue dwells.

"I entreat you, my dear Hardcastle, to curb your disinterested spirit, whilst I indulge my provident one, as it relates to my child's accommodations. She must have a nursing maid, she will need a carriage; and I have explained myself fully to the counsellor on these points. In regard to my expectations as these relate to my child's advantage, they are incalculable! I fondly hope when we meet again to behold her adorned in the attractive graces of modesty and gentleness, rich in piety, and principled in duty: such was her mother, and to Mrs. Hardcastle was she indebted for the example she rivalled. Forget not to prepare her for wealth, she will be probably amongst the number of those whom the world envies. Teach her,

Hardcastle, the *duties* annexed to wealth, and give her those treasures that will amply supply the want of gold."

The remaining part of the letter is suppressed as useless to the subject before us, although it marks the utmost anxiety and tenderness for the object of Mr. Cowley's cares.

Rachel Cowley had nearly attained her fifth year, when she was joyfully received in London by Mrs. Hardcastle. Mrs. Allen had prudently refused to have any attendant with her on the voyage, and had not Captain Vernon's fondness for her pupil frustrated her designs, it is probable the little rebel to authority might have appeared to greater advantage in the eyes of wisdom than she did. But the extreme loveliness of her person, her near affinity to a friend still tenderly regretted, and the circumstances under

which she beheld her, soon rendered Mrs. Hardcastle favourably disposed towards a child whose misfortune it had been, to be from her birth the idol of slaves, and the ruler of their master. A few days were given to Mrs. Allen's business and the child's repose in town, when they were conducted to the home which Heaven had graciously destined for them.

Mr. Hardcastle's house was a fit abode for its inmates, and from the hour it became the family residence, Mr. Hardcastle had given up a profession he never loved, and relinquished the pursuits of the barrister for those of the farmer, and the indulgence of a taste which had rendered his habitation an ornament to the adjacent country. The little stranger was met at Worcester by Mr. Hardcastle and his two children. This excursion was short for them, but its delights were of importance, for it prepared the new

comer for the pleasures of Heathcot-Farm; and by the time the little group had reached the room appointed for their recreation, the epithets of brother and sister were become favourites. It may appear useless minutia to delineate the characters of the children thus become our heroine's playmates; but no author is without opinions of his own: and in consequence of the privileges which my own pen at this period of my history gives me, I think it necessary to describe Mrs. Hardcastle's pupils.

Lucy Hardcastle had nearly attained her eighth year, when her mother's duties were called upon in favour of Miss Cowley. Horace, her brother, was not yet seven, and of a disposition so similar to that of the little stranger, that he soon engrossed her favour and preference. Of Lucy it might be said, that nature had cast her in a mould so perfect, that for

every proof of punctual care and tenderness, she paid "love—fair looks—and true obedience."

"Still thinking all too little payment for so great a debt," the judicious mother of these children had, from the first indications of the difference which nature had marked in their characters, applied to each the peculiar culture which each demanded; and though the bold and vigorous shoots of her son's ardent spirit were still unsubdued, yet she had trained him to obedience and docility by the firmness and gentleness of her guiding hand; and force could meet contradiction without petulance. His activity, his gay and volatile spirits, endeared him to a companion as fearless of danger and fatigue as himself, and whose ingenuity rivalled his own in expedients to direct and enjoy every interval of time allotted to play. In the first

instance of Mrs. Hardcastle's exercise of her jurisdiction, she had found Horace a very useful agent in her purposes of wisdom. Her new pupil, with infantile fondness, was ambitious of learning all that Horace learnt, and she became stationary at his elbow with her lesson whilst he studied his, in order that she might run and frolic with him when his task was accomplished. Without tracing the probable effects of these early impressions on minds constituted to love and harmonize with each other, it shall suffice, that it was frequently observed in the family, that the habit of yielding up her will to Horace, was become so easy a lesson to Rachel Cowley, that she practised compliance even with her maid-servant. As she advanced in age, this preference became more useful to her, and more noticed by those around her; and the obvious stimulus to every exertion of her talents, was the wish to please her

"brother Horace." Mrs. Hardcastle was gratified by the effects which had resulted from the uniform principles of her pupil's mind, and from which had sprung the most promising of her hopes, as these fondly contemplated the future excellencies and happiness of a young creature endeared to her heart by time, and ties not less strong than those of the mother to a favoured child. The good Mrs. Allen, engaged in her subordinate duties of watching over the personal comforts of the children, saw with delight the impetuosity of her darling's temper gradually yielding to the mild controul of the timid Lucy, and every angry passion bowing down to the check of Horace's eye. But Mr. Hardcastle, alive to every suggestion of a mind scrupulously just, and whose acquaintance with the human heart was founded on experience more than on the speculations of theorists and philosophers, could without

difficulty recal the period, at which, in the elegant language of our poetress, he might himself have addressed his wife when a girl of eleven or twelve years old with these harmonious lines:

"When first upon your tender cheek
I saw the morn of beauty break
With mild and cheering beam,
I bow'd before your infant shrine,
The earliest sighs you had were mine,
And you my darling theme.

"I saw you in that opening morn,
For beauty's boundless empire born,
And first confess'd your sway;
And e'er your thoughts, devoid of art,
Could learn the value of a heart,
I gave my heart away."

The peculiar circumstances of fortune in which Miss Cowley had been left by Mrs. Dawson's will, her prospects in life, and above all, the confidence which her father had placed in her principles,

strengthened his apprehensions for his son's future conduct, and the consequences to be expected from so apparent an attachment and sympathy in character, as his vigilant eye detected in the mutual, though childish conversation of a boy and a girl. He communicated his fears to his wife; and the separation which followed, was the tribute which virtue and rectitude exacted from the tender parents. Horace was sent to his maternal uncle's, to complete his education; and the same year Mrs. Hardcastle commenced her annual visit to London, for three months, in order to give her young charge, then in her twelfth year, the advantages of the first-rate masters in those accomplishments which her fortune rendered necessary A circle of friends, who, like herself, conceived that no girl beyond the age of infancy could be better placed than in the drawing-room, in a society composed of both

sexes, qualified and disposed to be useful to their innocence and improvement, bounded Mrs. Hardcastle's town amusements, and spared her the lessons necessary to the young candidate for notice, who at a certain age is emancipated from the routine of a school, or a nursery in the attic; or in other words, "brought out" for the gaze of idle curiosity, and to be disposed of to the highest bidder.

Rachel Cowley's introduction to the world was unmarked by any *eclat* of this kind; and whilst probably she and her friend Lucy were daily acquiring good manners and knowledge, they neither suspected nor thought of the extent of the obligations they were under to those who were forming their minds, and determining their future taste for the enjoyments of *rational* and responsible beings.

During this period of Miss Cowley's life, her father had gradually recovered his health and spirits; urged by the remonstrances and arguments of his friends, he had, on parting with his daughter, employed his leisure, and diverted his mind by building a house on a newly purchased plantation nearer to Kingston, and within the reach of a friend to whom he was peculiarly attached. Amused by this object of pursuit, he was led to other improvements of the spot; and in his new abode he saw another Eden bloom, without the sad recollection which had haunted his footsteps in the favourite retreat of his still regreted wife and his beloved child. Mr. Cowley, in consequence of his multiplied avocations, and the renewal of his social feelings, became satisfied with mentioning from time to time his *intention* of visiting England.

Mr. Hardcastle was no stranger to

the real cause of his friend's delay, but his prudence concealed from his ward a subject of regret to himself, and of concern to his wife and Mrs. Allen. The negro girl who had been selected, for the sweetness of her temper and the graces of nature, as the playmate in Miss Cowley's nursery, had gained the notice of her father, and had enjoyed Mrs. Allen's attentions to her improvement in useful learning. It had been debated whether Marian might not have been serviceable to her young lady during the voyage: the proposal had been rejected; for Mrs. Allen perfectly understood that the compliances of a slave were not of that sort which her pupil needed. She therefore left the girl to the care of the housekeeper, and in a condition of ease and comfort under Mrs. Cowley's roof. Poor Cowley was soothed in his first depression of spirits on losing sight of his idol, by finding he had a sharer in his sorrow;

and he gratified his benevolence by being Marian's consoler. She in her turn solaced his lonely hours by talking of her "dear missee," and accompanying him in his walks. Habits of affection and kindness were thus mutually formed, and gave rise to an attachment incompatible with innocence and honour. At an early age Marian was formally emancipated from her chains as a *negro slave*, in order to bear the shackles of a mistress. But in this deviation from his hitherto regular and moral conduct, Mr. Cowley forgot not *decorum;* his favourite resided with privacy at the more remote plantation, which was called the Creek Savannah, and he lived in the new house already mentioned. His friends, who loved him, overlooked a frailty which unfortunately was not particularly Mr. Cowley's weakness: but they did more; for they attributed his conduct to the steady purpose of remaining unmarried for his daughter's sake!

Mr. Hardcastle's opinions were not of this pliant sort; but he well knew that his arguments would be lost on a man who had silenced his own principles of religious observances: certain that Miss Cowley had experienced no failure of her father's affection or generosity, he contented himself with performing his duty, and providing against the consequences so unavoidably connected with Mr. Cowley's absence from his child. He well knew, that without the reciprocal acts of love and duty, the ties of consanguinity would be feeble. He had daily proofs that Miss Cowley was little affected by the protracted promises contained in her father's letters; that her happiness was centered in the bosom of his family, and that the thought of being separated from it, never occurred as within the line of probability. Every means of prudence had been applied to obviate this evil. Conversations had been pur-

posely appointed, to keep up in her memory "her dear father," his affection for her, "his sacrifice of his comforts for her benefit." "His generosity and amiable temper" were traced with minuteness; and her petitions to Heaven included mercies for a parent, so justly entitled to her duty and love. These lessons of wisdom had not been lost on the docile heart of the child. She listened with pleasure to these tales of her "good papa," and forgot him when clinging to her "mamma Hardcastle." As she advanced in age, Mr. and Mrs. Hardcastle more assiduously attended to the views before them; and with the entire persuasion of their own minds, that the time was rapidly approaching, when Mr. Cowley would recal his daughter, they endeavoured to prepare her for the summons. To this intent, Mrs. Hardcastle sometimes read to her extracts from her mother's letters, in which she described

the natural beauties of Jamaica; the society she had met with; the estimation in which her husband was held; her own amusements and happy life; and the activity and benevolent cares which supplied to her husband an indemnification for the absence of his London friends. Unacquainted with disguise, Miss Cowley left no doubt on Mrs. Hardcastle's mind as to the impressions which these letters and her conversations produced. Anxious wishes for her father's settling in London, and a declared repugnance to living in Jamaica, were the constant result of these attempts; and it was now become necessary to call upon a reason sufficiently cultivated to yield an assent to every argument of duty. Alarmed by an earnestness which she considered as immediately springing from Mr. Hardcastle's knowing her father's intention of recalling her home, she wrote to him a letter expressive of

her fears, and to implore him to leave a country in which *she* should be miserable. The reply to this letter is before me. Mr. Cowley assures his daughter, that he has no intention of endangering her health and safety in a voyage to him, nor any plans before him which will remove her from the protecting arms of "her dear Mrs. Hardcastle." He thus proceeds: "The habits of many years have made my avocations pleasurable: indicision and indolence stand in the way of your wishes and my own views; yet I hope to be with you next year in your dear foggy island. Be satisfied, my dear Rachel, with this assurance, and believe that my procrastination proceeds from my regard for your happiness, not from any abatement of my tenderness. You are, my child, under the eye of a mother, qualified to render you worthy of the one who bore you. I am not jealous of her ascend-

ancy over you; tell her so; and that you have my permission to love her as tenderly as you can. She will be too just and too generous to monopolize your whole heart; but she will not forget to decorate that corner of it which your father occupies, and which a husband may share, with the ornament which passeth shew. Continue, as you have done, to deserve her maternal cares, and remain the hope of your truly affectionate father,

"HENRY COWLEY."

"P. S. I write to Hardcastle, and Captain Vernon will inform you of my good looks, tho' not in the rapturous style in which he speaks of my lovely girl, and his Heathcot holidays."

CHAP II.

THUS passed the first transient cloud which had depressed the gaiety of Miss Cowley's temper; and, delighted by the contents of her father's letter, the glow of gratitude gave him an interest in her bosom which she had never before felt, and supplied her with a never-failing motive for proving herself worthy of such a father. In the following winter all was gloom and sadness at Heathcot. Mrs. Hardcastle was at first, to use her own encouraging words, "only slightly indisposed with a cold;" but the malady was of that sort which, whilst it represses hope, fallaciously invites it; and the calm

and patient invalid, unwilling to breal down its deceitful promises, aided the de ceiver by her endearing smiles and uniforn serenity, till her strength was subdued and medicine was found useless. Montl had thus succeeded to month: during thi period Mrs. Hardcastle contemplated with a foresight of that recompense she was shortly to reach, the fruits of well doing, by witnessing the conduct of a child who had for so many years shared her maternal cares, and had been so peculiarly an object of her solicitude and vigilance. She beheld the restless and volatile girl, stationed in the sick room, sedate, tender, and assiduous; prompt in every soothing, kind office; dexterous in every expedient to relieve and alleviate; patient of all opposition, and unwearied in watching by her side. She saw her character rising into magnanimity as the danger augmented; supporting by her fortitude the sinking spirits

of Lucy; and cheering the despondency of Mr. Hardcastle by arguments drawn from a faith in which she herself trusted for support. She saw the pang of anguish checked by a smile of tender sympathy; and with the greetings of love and assumed cheerfulness, she saw the cheek of her beloved pupil pale with fatigue and grief. Horace could not be kept from a scene of this kind; he had been summoned home some weeks before his mother's case was judged hopeless; and Mrs. Hardcastle, either too much occupied with different thoughts, or too happy in the presence of her son to attend to those cautions which had banished him from his home, saw, without shewing any inquietude, that time had not weakened the affection of her children. Miss Cowley seemed rather to invite her animadversions on her conduct, as this related to Horace; and one day she even ventured to observe to the con-

tented mother, who had been gratified by some tender office in which Horace had assisted, "that *she at least* could not be surprised by seeing that Horace Hardcastle was still Rachel Cowley's *favourite*." The smile with which this observation was received had in it nothing for discouragement; and Mrs. Hardcastle added, "that she hoped he would always be the favourite with the wise and virtuous."

A few days before she expired, she found, on awaking from a lethargic slumber, Miss Cowley and Horace watching at her bedside. "You have been sleeping, my dear mother," said Horace, "and we have insisted on Lucy and Mrs. Allen's going into the garden for a little air." Miss Cowley during this time was prepared with a cordial for the patient; and she, raising herself, was supported by her son. She took the offered

medicine in her feeble hands, and fixing her eyes on Miss Cowley, said something, but so low, that neither of the interested witnesses of this scene could understand it. "Oh, it was her blessing," cried the agonized Horace, "her *last* blessing on" ——— "*my children*," said the subdued mother, sinking on her pillow, and convulsively holding their hands in her own. Horace, unable to maintain any longer his self-command, hastily left the room, and Miss Cowley silently gave herself up to tears. The exhausted invalid again dosed; and she breathed her last sigh, without further confirming the ardent wishes of those to whom her concurrence would have been a sanction for that affection which both believed she wished not to oppose, and which both as fondly hoped would have rendered her happy.

Mrs. Hardcastle's death appeared for a

time to have overwhelmed the family with all the force of a sudden and unexpected blow; every one wanted consolation, but none was found who could administer it. Mr. Hardcastle was the first who was capable of exertions; he recollected Lucy, and the feelings of the husband awakened those of the father. Religion sheds its balm on its true votaries: domestic comfort succeeded; and Mr. Hardcastle in contemplating the child before him, blessed Heaven for the solace it gave to his sorrow.

Lucy was not long without discovering, that her brother had found a sweet consolation in Miss Cowley's sympathy and society; and she began to wonder, that her father should have so apparently overlooked what had so recently called forth her observation, namely, that Horace, near twenty years old, was a more dangerous guest than when short of fifteen.

Perfectly acquainted with the motives which had led her father to submit to his absence, she took an opportunity of remarking to her friend, that Horace's unguarded behaviour would soon banish him again from Heathcot; and that she was surprised he had been permitted to stay so long, which she solely attributed to his father's state of mind, and his being so much alone. "If you had been as observant of my conduct as of your brother's," replied Miss Cowley with seriousness, "you would have perceived what you call the same indiscretion on my part: for the truth is, we wish not to conceal an affection on which our happiness depends. Horace knows that I love him, and I know he loves me, and whether at Heathcot or in the deserts of Arabia, we shall live for each other. I am too young, you will say," continued she with increased seriousness of manner,

"to decide thus positively on a business of such importance to my future happiness. But I answer, that I am not a romantic girl. I will stand the test of time with cheerfulness; for either I have no title to the name of a natural being, or I am qualified to judge of Horace's title to my esteem and regard. I shall place before my father, as soon as we meet, the *solid* grounds I have for my preference of your brother: I will leave to his judgment and liberality of mind to determine the time when I may be supposed to know my own heart, and to consider whether Mr. Hardcastle's son will be any disgrace to Mr. Cowley or his supposed wealth. But I have no apprehensions on this point. My father is a generous minded man. He married for happiness himself, and he would revolt at the idea of sacrificing his daughter at the shrine of avarice or ambition. No, no, Lucy, "added she

with animation," in attaching my affections to an honest and worthy man, I have not sinned against that authority which my father claims; and to give me to a Hardcastle for life will be the consummation of that parental love which consigned me into the hands of your excellent mother. He will soon be here; he will appeal to your father's understanding and tried friendship; Mr. Hardcastle will discard his scruples, and sanction, with his consent, my right to the name I revere. "We shall be sisters," "continued she, fondly kissing Lucy's cheek. "One bond of love will unite us for life. I have no fears."

Miss Hardcastle, fully convinced that nothing could be gained in favour of prudence and circumspection during the influence of hopes so sanguine in favour of love, suffered her friend's earnestness to abate, without opposing her fond be-

lief by producing those difficulties which she foresaw would arise to baffle her intentions and to disturb her brother's happiness. She soon quitted the room in order to consider those steps necessary to its security, and the conduct she had to pursue. But Lucy Hardcastle had been taught to consider a positive duty as liable to no appeal from inclination. She knew, that, in order to prevent Miss Cowley's growing attachment to her brother, her parents had yielded up a point, on which depended their highest satisfactions. Her mother had frequently mentioned losing sight of her son, as one of those privations which had exercised her fortitude in a peculiar degree; and that she could never have supported his absence from his father's tuition, and her own love, but from the considerations of the duty she owed to Mr. Hardcastle, and the reverence she felt for his judgment. With this example before her,

Lucy hastily repaired to her father and ingenuously imparted to him her own suspicions. "Disposed as I am," continued she smiling, "to favour those lovers, I think it my duty, my dear Sir, to refer myself to you. I shall soon be Rachel's confidant, and governed as I shall be, by my affection for her and for my brother, I may be led to oppose your will, and frustrate your plans of wisdom and prudence. I am certain that their early attachment is confirmed and strengthened by their respectively discovering the improvements which time has produced in both."

"I would rather see your brother *dead*, than the husband of this young creature!" replied Mr. Hardcastle, rising with emotion; "or rather, let me implore death for my relief, before I see him pointed at as the base and interested purloiner of this girl's affections! I know too well

my child, the malignity of human nature. In a case like this, no allowance would be made, by far the greater part of the world, for motives more pure and honourable than a sordid consideration of her wealth,—her attractive beauty, and his age of passion. The natural results of undepraved youth and innocence would be set aside, in order to brand that father with infamy, who thus provided for his own son, by cheating another of his daughter. But this is not all: you know the tenor of Mrs. Dawson's will. My honour and reputation have hung on this child's life from the hour she has been under my roof; for her death would secure to me her grandmother's property. Your dear mother, in this single instance, opposed her opinion to mine. On pointing out to her the *hazard* of receiving into our hands a child thus circumstanced, she laughed at my fears, and asked me, whether her husband had so

lived, as to be in danger of any imputation on his integrity. 'Be more just to yourself,' said she, with honest pride; "the virtue which has marked your life, will be your security. You stand beyond the reach of that malice which would dare to conceive that Hardcastle would take advantage of the helpless innocence of an infant committed to his care.' She urged her promise to Mrs. Cowley, and to Mrs. Dawson, and with dignity, added, that Rachel Cowley could be no where so secure as with *her heirs*. 'We will perform our duty, my dear husband,' said she, 'and trust to Heaven for a recompence, of more value than her money.' I was conquered; and Heaven in its mercy has preserved this child's life. But what think you would be the conclusions drawn from Horace's marrying her? They are too apparent not to be seen. 'Foiled in one expectation,' it will be said, 'Hardcastle has

succeeded in a more lucrative project. *A marriage* will not only secure to his son Mrs. Dawson's fortune, but Mr. Cowley's princely revenue also; and by favouring his son's views, and entangling the girl's heart, he has enriched his family.' How would you repel a scandal of this nature, my dear child? Not by saying, that Miss Cowley loved your brother; for that would only prove that she had been betrayed by the insidious flattery to which she was exposed.—I have been too heedless," added Mr. Hardcastle, "my mind of late has been ——!" Mr. Hardcastle's firmness yielded —he pressed Lucy to his bosom, and wept audibly.

On reassuming his composure, he proceeded to inform his daughter, that he had, for nearly a week, been hesitating in what manner to answer an application, which Mr. Freeman, her uncle, had

transmitted to his consideration, relative to Horace. "You have, my dear girl, been useful to your father; by your information," added he, "I shall no longer want resolution. In regard to Miss Cowley, remember that I wish not to interrupt the confidence which subsists between you, nor will I tempt your honesty by a single question. You know the reasons which force me to refuse to your brother an object so worthy of his admiration, and my tender regard. I leave to your prudence to point out the conduct you ought to pursue with your friend; and after you have perused your uncle's letter, you will be prepared to mention to her Horace's removal from England."

Poor Lucy felt that virtue had its conflicts in her bosom; and hastily retiring, gave herself up to the regret of having, by her interference, doomed her brother

to an undetermined course of banishment.

The subject of the letter in question necessarily requires some information relative to the character and situation of the writer, Horace's uncle. The Rev. Mr. Freeman having succeeded to a village living, of about four hundred pounds per annum, in the vicinity of Exeter, at an advanced period of his life, and with the peculiar habits of a man who had for many years lived in his college, appeared, on settling in his excellent parsonage-house, to have forgotten that "it was not good for man to be alone." His friends and neighbours frequently reminded him, notwithstanding, that his house was too large for a bachelor, and that he was *losing time.* Mr. Freeman had already experienced the justness of this latter observation; for, with painful regret, it recalled to his memory, that his season for

happiness was irrecoverably passed. He had been tenderly attached to an amiable young woman at an early period of his life; and whilst his expectations were undecided in regard to that provision necessary for her security, his talents and conduct soon distinguished him at the university; and, supported by mutual esteem and hope, the lovers looked forwards to happiness. The death of the lady interrupted this calm prospect. Mr. Freeman became a "book-worm," "a quiz," and a tutor in his college, who suited no young man of spirit. Notwithstanding this character, he had, with all his singularities to boot, acquired such a reputation for learning, and the happy talent of communicating it, that his friends seemed determined to pursue him to his retreat; and he at length yielded to the plan they proposed, of receiving four pupils under his roof. These were young men whose fathers

conceived a couple of years noviciate, passed with Mr. Freeman, fully adequate to the advantages of being freed from the restraints of a grammar-school, for the enjoyment of a fellow-commoner's gown. Amongst the number of those who had respected the "sanctified" tutor at —— college, was the Duke of J——, then at the university. Some short time after Horace Hardcastle had become an inmate in Mr. Freeman's house, this nobleman's son was also consigned to his uncle's care, for the twofold purposes of his education and the preservation of his health. Lord William S—— had, from his cradle, been extremely delicate; and in proportion as he grew up, consumptive symptoms had appeared. Scotland had been judged too unfriendly a climate for so tender a plant, and the duchess had serious arguments to produce against every public seminary of learning. The young man's father had not forgotten

his college tutor, and the mild air of Devonshire promised an amendment in health for his son. Mr. Freeman yielded to a solicitation thus urged; and although the pupil was not yet fourteen, and intruded on the fixed number, he was admitted. The amiable boy reached the priory before Horace had ceased to repent his absence from Heatheot-Farm; and the young nobleman soon found in him a companion more peculiarly attractive to his gentleness of temper, from the absence of that gaiety and activity of spirit, which was so distinguished a characteristic of Horace's mind. Grateful to a youth, who, although his senior, did not overlook him, as the more advanced pupils did; and who was neither too wise for his amusement, nor too insignificant for his associate, he attached himself to Hardcastle, with all the enthusiasm which results from warm affections and an unperverted nature;

and leaving to themselves the young men whose attainments placed them beyond their sphere of action, the newly arrived pupils gradually cemented those bonds of friendship, which, with the virtuous, not unfrequently prove the most indissoluble. When Horace was summoned to his mother's sick room, he had left his companion under a severe attack of the unrelenting cough; and so serious were now the symptoms of decay, that it was determined he should try the effects of sea-air and a voyage. A vessel was prepared with the sole view to his accommodation; a medical gentleman was engaged to accompany him, and a tutor was appointed for his guide and companion. Frequent voyages and short intervals of refreshment in more southern latitudes, were the objects of these arrangements; and the mild and uncomplaining invalid looked forwards with delight to the prospect of thus visiting

every port in the Mediterranean. Nothing was absent from this sanguine picture of hope, but his friend Horace; and without him, the gay colouring sunk at once into the flat and insipid sameness of a ship's cabin, or was charged with the desponding tints of never beholding him again. His father, who was with him, soon discovered his wishes; and immediately applied to Mr. Freeman for his good offices with Mr. Hardcastle, assuring him, that neither the young gentleman's time nor interest should be lost by a compliance with his request. This proposal was the subject of Mr. Freeman's letter to Horace's father; and the plan recommended, was not only favourable to Horace's future views, but also advantageous to his further improvement. The difficulties which had suspended Mr. Hardcastle's decision, will be easily imagined: his honour silenced the fond remonstrances of his heart; and he

determined on a separation, which would at once exclude his son from all personal intercourse with Miss Cowley for a longer time than he conceived her father would permit her to remain unmarried.

He lost no time in placing before his son his uncle's proposal, and his own entire concurrence in the plan. "In this sacrifice of my own comforts for your advantage," added the father, "I shall, I must be amply indemnified by seeing you escape from the danger which menaces you under my roof. In the duties of *friendship*, you may, my son, safely indulge the sensibility of a warm and affectionate nature; but in the presence of a beautiful girl, endeared to you by the sweet ties of infant sportiveness and familiar approach, you have forgotten, Horace, that passion and imagination are the usual rocks on which the honour and security of a young man are ship-

wrecked. I know that your principles are sound; I also know, that in the present delusion of your senses, there is no mixture of a sordid consideration in regard to Miss Cowley's wealth. No, Horace, you are too generous for such views, and she is too attractive to need them. But tell me, with what arguments would you confute the charge so strongly to be inferred from the circumstances in which we are placed relatively to this young lady, by her grand-mother's will? I know Mr. Cowley, and I believe him to be a liberal-minded man; but would Horace Hardcastle find in an *extorted* consent to his union with his daughter, the approbation needful for his *honour*? Recollect, that a gift not freely bestowed, is, and must be, oppressive to a noble mind; and the tenderness and weakness of a parent, who yields to the importunities of a fond, love-sick girl, furnish no excuse for the man who has fradu-

lently counteracted her parent's views and expectations, by gaining an empire over her affections. Be more just to yourself, my son. You want not wealth to elevate you, nor firmness to conquer your present feelings. Be not deceived by the enthusiasm which now governs you. The good report of your fellow-creatures is of more importance to your happiness than you believe; and from the censure which will involve you and myself of having made a property of this lovely girl, and cheated her unsuspecting and generous father, there will be no appeal even to the candid." "I will go," answered Horace, his face crimsoned with blushes, "I will go to the farthest part of the globe, to spare you from such calumny. But I must love Rachel Cowley, or cease to live. Suffer me to depart with this shield to guard my youth, with this invigorating hope, that I may one day convince her father that I am

worthy *of her*, if not of *his fortune*. Let him, if it please him, build hospitals with his money: I shall not want it!" "Trusting to the effects of time and absence," answered Mr. Hardcastle, "I will finish this conversation, by my positive prohibition of your corresponding with Miss Cowley, either directly or indirectly, during your absence. I wish you to receive this command, as qualified by parental love. She is young, my dear Horace, as well as yourself; trust to your father; you may both change your present sentiments. Leave her to the only test of a permanent affection—more acquaintance with the world, and more knowledge of herself. Her situation and sphere in life will soon be very different from what they are at present. The society and the pleasures of the world will solicit her attention, and although I do not believe she will ever forget her early friends, time and absence

may, and will weaken the present impressions of her mind. Trust also something to my experience; even *you*, my dear Horace, may forget to a certain degree, this amiable young woman. You will be engaged in pursuits, which may, without any miracle, direct your thoughts from present objects; and you may live to feel, that Mr. Cowley's daughter is not necessary to your happiness." Poor Horace's agitations were not concealed. "Before we part," added the tender father, "let me assure you, that were this young creature *any* but what she *is*, I would select her from amidst thousands as a wife for my son. Let this assertion content you, and convince you of the importance I affix to the *firm* opposition I make to your affection. Be then *a Hardcastle;* and submit your passions to that controul which will secure to you the blessings of *a Hardcastle.*"

A short interval was allotted for the young man's preparations in order to his joining Lord William. Miss Cowley's firmness not only supported this hour, but also her friend Lucy's more tender spirits. She spoke of Horace's departure with calmness, and observed from time to time, that he could not better fill up a year or too than by travelling. On the morning he left the parental roof, she further manifested her resolution and spirit. Poor Horace rose to obey the third or fourth summons which had announced that "all was ready." "We part," said she, offering him her glowing cheek, "as brother and sister—such be our adieux. But when next we meet, Horace, this hand shall testify the faith and truth of Rachel Cowley. *Thus* I plight it!" She raised her eyes to heaven, grasped his hand a moment, and then darted from the room, leaving Mr.

Hardcastle to his surprise, and to comfort his son.

A few weeks after Horace had quitted England, Miss Cowley's tranquillity was again interrupted. She had sent her father, with some specimens of her own talents in drawing, her picture at full length; this was the work of the first artist in London, and was acknowledged to be not only a capital picture, but also a striking resemblance of her by those friends who had seen it. Mr. Cowley, on receiving it, appears to have given indulgence to all the feelings of nature, in beholding the portrait of a child so dear to him, an object of delight and admiration to his friends. He praises the design, the attitude; in a word, the skill of the painter in the highest terms. "But," adds he, "if such be thy external endowments, he has had a subject for his labours worthy of them." He con-

tinues in this stile of gaiety to inform her, that, notwithstanding "the hazel eyes," which are said to be his gift, he thinks she so much resembles her mother, that he had placed her picture opposite to her mother's portrait; and that he passes from one to the other, with sensations at once pleasurable and painful. "Your arrival, in the mean time," continues he, "has been celebrated by a grand dinner, to which my friends resorted in crowds. Curiosity and admiration at length gave place to a contest between the 'dove-like blue eyes,' and the 'saucy hazel ones.' Your champions were Captain Vernon and your old friend Oliver Flint, whom you will remember as your favourite, although you threw your wax doll at his head, because he said it was prettier than Marian. As to your other valorous knight, I have only to recommend to you, when you next see him with his cargo of

sweetmeats, to caution him to be more moderate in his zeal for your glory; for had he not been arrack-proof as completely as he is salt-water proof, he had been a dead man; for by maintaining your cause he has had a fever, which frightened his poor wife into a sick bed." This letter finishes by mentioning the arrival of two strangers in Jamaica; namely, a gentleman of the name of Flamall, with his nephew, Mr. Philip Flint, the posthumous brother of Mr. Oliver Flint, the gentleman already mentioned in his letter. "My worthy old friend," continues Mr. Cowley, "has drooped ever since the loss of his sons. I do not wonder that this has been the case. They had been his support under the severe trials of losing a good wife, and several other children. They had attained to an age in which he might, and had reasonably hoped to find in them a support and comfort to his grave.

In one week an epidemic fever rendered him *childless*. Poor Oliver was for a time overwhelmed by this dreadful blow; but the constitution of his mind and body have saved him. He turned his thoughts to remedy his grief, not to repinings for an affliction sent him, as he said, 'for his good;' and he has found one in this young brother, whom he never knew till lately. This child was the fruit of his father's second marriage, who died at an advanced age, leaving his young widow pregnant. The young man's name is Philip, and his age nearly that of poor Oliver's eldest son, who was also christened Philip. On this slight conformity the good old man erected his hopes of supplying to himself an heir and a consolation. The appearance of this young man, who is accompanied by his maternal uncle Mr. Flamall, has renovated poor Oliver. He is, indeed, a most promising and handsome young man, and

my friend already fancies he resembles his son: no one contests this point with him; nor is there any one who does not think the young man worthy of his brother's protection. He is well educated, and his manners are pleasing and polite, though rather too reserved and circumspect for some amongst us. These strangers have made a rake of me for some time; but I have refused to dine with the *heir apparent*, in order to write to you more at my leisure. Since your picture has graced my saloon, your old friend Oliver can talk of nothing but getting a wife for his idol; and this morning, Mr. Flamall explicitly began a negotiation for my girl, stating his nephew's great expectations from his sister, an old maiden lady, whose name is Lucretia Flint. This, with Mr. Flint's fortune, is a *bait*, but not one for your father, my child. I have not forgotten your dear mother: to her undivided af-

fection, not *her money*, was I indebted for my happiness; and, instead of years passed in contention and wretchedness, I had the satisfaction of knowing that my wife preferred her husband to his rival, although that rival was *her mother*. I do not believe you have been instructed to despise a man simply because he stands well in your father's opinion; nor will that father, my dear child, bargain away your happiness, in order to add acre to acre. I told Mr. Flamall, with more jocularity than seriousness, that I meant to see my girl before I gave her away, and to know the value of my merchandise before I *sold it*. Be not, however, surprised should you see your old friend Mr. Flint; for, coward as he is, I verily believe he would cross the Atlantic in a boat to plead with you for his darling Philip."

Kind as this letter was, it alarmed

Miss Cowley. She once more renewed her entreaties on the subject of her father's leaving Jamaica; and in the most unequivocal terms declared her repugnance to any matrimonial overtures. "Let me conjure you, my dear Sir," urged the apprehensive pleader, "to return to England, and to renew with me those endearing ties of an undivided duty and the purest gratitude. I seek to emulate my mother, but it shall be in first shewing that I am your child, and not as a wife. Oh, let me for a time be your own Rachel Cowley!"

The father's reply to this appeal to his heart restored Miss Cowley to her usual cheerfulness. He good-humouredly rallies her on the needless rhetoric she employed to restrain the ardours of a lover, apparently as little disposed to be shackled as her herself. "From the little I have seen of this young philoso-

pher," adds Mr. Cowley, "I believe he left his heart behind him; for our notable mothers, who are nibbling at the prize, can make nothing of him, and the girls already call him the stoic. I was much amused the other day by Captain Vernon's and Mr. Flamall's debate, in which you were the subject of contention. The uncle insisted that his nephew had been engaged in taking a drawing from your picture whilst I was at Oliver's with a gay party of ladies and gentlemen, and from which young Philip had contrived to absent himself for a long time. Vernon doubted of this employment of the youngster's time; 'but be this as it may,' added he, with his usual bluntness, 'I tell you that young Flint will never do for a suitor for Miss Cowley, whatever he may for her picture; she would laugh at him.' Mr. Flamall was not much pleased by this frankness, and he coldly replied, that he presumed

Miss Cowley had not made a confession of her faith to Captain Vernon. 'There is no need she should,' answered he; 'her spirit and sense speak for themselves: and whilst all the world acknowledge her beauty, she shews them that she will not easily be won.' I shall spare my pen the labour of writing the remainder of his rhapsodies; but he finished by telling Flamall that he could recommend a wife to his nephew, who would exactly suit him; and that was Miss Lucy Hardcastle. His description of the young lady satisfied Flamall that the honest captain did not think his nephew undeserving of *a good wife*, though disqualified to manage *a saucy one*. I have, however, reason to believe I shall hear no more of Mr. Philip Flint's *passion* for Miss Rachel Cowley; therefore she may take one feather from vanity's plume."

Mr. Cowley finishes this letter by men-

tioning the steps he had taken preparatory to quitting the island; and, with much satisfaction, informs his daughter that he has retained Mr. Flamall as his agent: he enlarges on this gentleman's talents and capacity for business, and concludes with the highest eulogium on his manners and agreeable qualities.

It appears that the honourable veteran in the service of Neptune and Bacchus, delivered, as was usual, this packet and his sweetmeats, in person, at Heathcot, where he passed a few days with a young creature, who, from her birth, had shared in his warm heart an affection which he had carried to idolatry for her mother.

His account of his patron, Mr. Cowley, by no means tallied with the apparent ease and gaiety contained in the letters he brought; and Mr. Hardcastle was told that Mr. Cowley had been seized

with a fit whilst at Mr. Flint's table, which dreadfully alarmed all present: happily a medical gentleman was one of the guests, and immediate relief was given. "It has shaken him," added the captain; "but we hope he will rally again. I saw him the day I embarked; he made me promise not to say a word of this business to you; but I did not like his looks, and I thought he walked but poorly: God grant I may see him in my next trip! It should be the last labour of the Charlotte. She was launched to carry him and his angel wife to Jamaica; and if she swims safely till he is with his daugher, she will have been a lucky vessel to me." He passed his hand over his eyes, and whistled away an emotion that he could not otherwise conquer.

The captain's apprehensions were but too well founded. Mr. Cowley lived not

to reach England. A second and third attack of the palsy proved fatal; and poor Vernon found at his return many mourners to sympathize with him in a sorrow legitimately founded on his knowledge of the man, and on gratitude to his benefactor. We will pass over in silence the effects which this melancholy intelligence produced at Heathcot-Farm. Miss Cowley was roused from the deepest dejection of spirits by the events which succeeded to the first shock. Mr. Steadman summoned her and Mr. Hardcastle to London; and with precautions, which he judged necessary, placed before the orphan a copy of her late father's will, which, with all its requisite documents, had been formerly sent to him by the executor, Mr. Flamall.

The contents were, indeed, calculated to astonish and afflict his daughter. She was named as the successor to his fortune

in the usual terms. His property stood answerable, however, for the provision of his two natural children and their mother. These children were boys, the eldest not yet ten years old. To each was bequeathed five thousand pounds; to the mother three hundred pounds per annum. To the survivor of the boys this property devolved, unless the mother lived till the children had both reached twenty-one, in which case her annuity was to be divided between them. To Mrs. Allen two thousand pounds; bequests to some domestics, and hundred-pounds rings to several friends; amongst these Counsellor Steadman, Mr. Hardcastle, and Mr. Oliver Flint were named. Mr. Flamall, with a thousand pounds legacy, was named as the guardian of his two sons, and appointed agent for the trust of superintending his concerns in Jamaica. An income of five hundred pounds per annum was annexed to this trust; and provision

was made for Mr. Flamall's residence at whichever of the plantations he chose for his abode. The important clause next follows, and in these words nearly: "Having had the most unequivocal proofs of the integrity of those trustees named by Mrs. Dawson, for the security of her property in favour of Rachel Cowley, he still leaves to their wisdom the entire management of the trust in their hands; but it behoved him to shew to the world, and to his daughter, that he had neither relinquished his rights as a parent, nor been unmindful of the duties annexed to the name of a father; and, not doubting his child's ready obedience to his commands, he had, with the concurrence of the parties most nearly concerned, chosen her a husband in the person of Philip Flint, &c." On the celebration of this marriage Mr. Flamall's jurisdiction terminated, as far as it related to Miss Cowley. She was immediately to enter into

the full and unconditional enjoyment of her fortune when she became Mr. Philip Flint's wife.

The penalty of a refusal to comply with the terms thus briefly specified, was a minority, which reached to her twenty-fifth year; and in case she married any other man, save the aforesaid Philip Flint, without the consent of Mr. Flamall, the whole of the Jamaica property was tied up for her children's benefit; and in case of no issue, devolved to his two sons. He further enjoins his daughter's obedience to this *his representative*, even as it regards her place of residence: stipulating, however, that he has conditioned for her remaining in England, not only while she bears the name of Cowley, but also under that of Mrs. Flint, having received the most satisfactory assurances that Philip Flint will not live in Jamaica. In a word, Mr. Cowley's will firmly makes Mr. Flamall the sovereign arbitor of

Miss Cowley's fate till she becomes his niece; and the harsh and dictatorial language of the law was exhausted to sanction and confirm this excess of parental authority.

Miss Cowley, with indignation, pronounced the will a forgery; and she produced as evidence for this opinion her father's character, his unlimited affection for her, his confidence in Mr. Hardcastle, and his letters, in which Philip Flint had been named. Her friends admitted her reasoning, but the will was legally executed and witnessed by Oliver Flint, Mr. Cowley's *valet de chambre*, and two of the most respectable gentlemen in the island. Juba, the faithful Juba, had carried Rachel Cowley in his arms. He had long been a free man, and he had written the first letter to England of his beloved master's death; in which he dwelt with comfort on the calmness and

clearness of the deceased man's faculties till the last moment. She persisted in her opinion, and with great firmness said, she would seek redress in a court of Chancery, ordering the counsellor to enter a caveat to the will immediately. The dignity which she assumed, the acuteness of her observations, and the absence of those fears which the gentlemen were prepared to expect, gave them at once to understand that the client was not a minor in good sense. The counsellor was struck with a character so superior to what he expected in a girl not much more than eighteen; and he told her candidly, that his opinion and Mr. Hardcastle's entirely agreed with her own. "I have gained," continued he, "some information respecting this Flamall. He was, I find, one of those men who in the practice of the law are its disgrace; he is expert in all the tricks and

chicanery of his tribe; and your property is too valuable a trust to be wrested from him without a struggle on his part. The means of justice are slow, and we must contrive to counteract his villany, not to dispute his right to be *a villain*. Have patience, my dear Miss Cowley, I have more than once caught a rascal in his own toils. A false will cannot easily be produced without confederates; something may transpire, for rogues are rarely faithful to each other. Be satisfied that you are at liberty to refuse the husband he has so carefully provided for you. You want nothing from Jamaica, and in a few years you will be mistress of your father's fortune, and in a situation to support your brothers in their difficulties with a man certainly disqualified for their guardian. We will know more of him, and appear his dupes for a season; he will only rob you with the

more avidity from finding he is suspected."

Miss Cowley assented to this advice, and determined to be governed by her zealous friend; secretly hoping, that the restrictions of her father's will, to which she appeared disposed to submit, would at least secure her from the solicitations of lovers; and thus silence Mr. Hardcastle's scruples in regard to his son.

Before she left Mr. Steadman, she saw her formal rejection of Mr. Philip Flint dispatched to her new guardian. Counsellor Steadman wrote this letter, and Miss Cowley's attestation of its being dictated by her, satisfied her, that she had crushed the hopes of the insolent pretender to her hand. Her natural cheerfulness returned, and Lucy found her friend the better for the little jour-

ney. But this season of tranquillity lasted not many months; a letter from Mr. Flamall, which it is necessary to transcribe here, will assign the cause of new anxieties at Heathcot-Farm. Mr. Flamall, who seemed to consider Mr. Steadman as the only friend of Miss Cowley, and, as a professional man, the proper medium through which his authority was to be announced to the heiress, thus writes to him:

"Bound as I am by the duties of my appointed trust, and prompted by my veneration and gratitude to fulfil in every point Mr. Cowley's intentions, as these related to his daughter, I think it proper to remove Miss Cowley from her present residence. From the period of Mrs. Hardcastle's death, her father had this intention; and I have frequently heard him regret, that his delay, and her reluctance to visit Jamaica, had post-

poned a resolution he thought indispensibly incumbent on him to execute. In his last illness he requested me to make it my first concern to place his daughter with a lady qualified to protect and guide her. I have, in consequence, written to my sister, Lady Maclairn, on this subject, and you will prepare my ward for her removal to Tarefield, the place of my sister's residence. I am not discouraged by Miss Cowley's refusal of my nephew. She does not know Philip Flint, who will, I am confident, convince her, and her friends, that her father was not less attentive to her happiness than to her fortune, in selecting him as her protector for life. More on this subject does not become me to say, less would be injustice to a man whose merits are acknowledged wherever he is known. I will not, however, pursue this subject further at present than by observing, that Miss Cowley may be led by her knowledge

of Mr. Philip Flint's connections in England, to consider more favourably of her good father's *wishes*. In the mean time, my nephew has cheerfully acceded to *mine*; and flatters himself, that by postponing his voyage to England for some months, he is not only gratifying Miss Cowley's delicacy in this hour of filial sorrow, but also offering her an homage which will not be unacceptable to her, as it will be of use to her interest; Mr. Cowley's large concerns requiring an inspection, and an arrangement which, in the first pressure of business, is more than I am equal to. The retirement in which Sir Murdock Maclairn's family lives, will not, in the present state of affairs, be irksome to *my ward*; the society of an accomplished woman will, I hope, compensate her for the temporary suspension of more unconfined amusements. Taking it for granted, that you will still hold the trust committed to you

by Mrs. Dawson's will, I shall annually remit to Sir Murdock Maclairn the same sum which Mr. Cowley assigned for his daughter's maintenance with Mr. Hardcastle, from the age *of infancy*. Being willing to shew my respect for Miss Cowley's wish, as this relates to Mrs. Allen's continuance in her service, I have prepared Lady Maclairn to receive what she might otherwise judge an useless appendage in a house regulated as Tarefield-hall is." Mr. Flamall concludes by informing his correspondent, that Miss Cowley's fortune is very ample; that he has to encounter the obstinacy of the boys' mother, who will not be parted from the children, nor suffer them to remain in their father's house. Mr. Philip Flint had, however, compromised matters; and the mother and children were placed by him in the family of a Mr. Dalrymple, a Scotchman, whom he had known at the university, in Edin-

burgh, and who kept a school in Kingston, with reputation. The boys were handsome, promising children; and he had no fears for them, but such as arose from the ignorance and excessive fondness of their mother, whom he always thought unworthy of the place she had held in Mr. Cowley's heart. It was, however, his intention to send the children to England for education, with his nephew, if he could prevail on the mother to consult their real good. Statements of effects in a general way, and details of his conduct, as regulated by the dying words of Mr. Cowley, in regard to the negroes on the plantations, to whom he had been a father, finish Mr. Flamall's letter.

Mr. Hardcastle, judging of the effects of this letter on Miss Cowley, from the sorrow with which it filled his anxious bosom, and justly apprehending the dan-

ger which might result from his "*child's*" removal to a family devoted to Mr. Flamall's views, strenuously concurred with Mr. Steadman, in advising Miss Cowley to take such steps as would at least secure her person from Mr. Flamall's controul. But she was not to be moved in her resolution of complying with his orders. "The future happiness of my life," said she, "depends on my compliance with this act of usurped authority. He will find," added she, with an air of triumph, "that in the hands of Providence the vilest instrument is made subservient to the purposes of mercy. I must quit Mr. Hardcastle's house; I have for some time *wished* to do so. Yes, I have wished it. I will convince that world which Mr. Hardcastle so much fears, that Rachel Cowley has not been influenced by those who have been her protectors, to prefer Horace Hardcastle for her future guardian. I will shew my independence, and maintain my claims to a choice which virtue

sanctions. It is of no moment where I pass this term of my banishment from all whom I love," continued she, melting into tears. "These people will soon discover, that I am not a girl to be trampled on, and their own advantage will secure to me civility. When I am five-and-twenty years of age, I presume the *world*, as well as the laws of my country, will deem me a free agent; and I should be the first to laugh at an attachment that could not stand my trial of its permanency. It is possible, that in the first instance Mr. Hardcastle's scruples will yield to his sorrow for my absence, and my own firmness, to some censures of his wisdom and circumspection; but we shall both find consolation in those principles which require the sacrifice of present security and happiness, to a more lasting and greater advantage." Mr. Hardcastle, unequal to the conflict, retired, not daring to trust his integrity with so irresistible a pleader.

Soon after, the following letter was in his hands; its contents will evince to the reader, the solicitude of Miss Cowley's friends at once to ascertain the safety of her removal from them.

" To Counsellor Steadman.

" Bishops-Auckland, Durham.

" MY DEAR FRIEND,

" My short residence in this part of the world, will unavoidably subject the intelligence you require to errors, notwithstanding my zeal and diligence. The truth is, that, as I have only the voice of the parish of Tarefield and its environs for my authorities, I am forced to place before you the history of a family at once peculiarly marked as the object of a fond partiality, and of inveterate

hatred. I leave to you to sift and resift the documents thus obtained: for my history includes a number of years and facts which are still the topics of conversation in this neighbourhood.

"Flamall was, as you have heard, for some years a practitioner in the law; and succeeded his father in the business of an attorney, with the credit which that father left him, who was an honest and an able man. His sister, now Lady Maclairn, was left to his direction, and, to the surprise of old Flamall's connections, to her brother's generosity. She was young and remarkably handsome, had been carefully and liberally educated, and was a virtuous and elegant young woman; but from some proofs of her brother's intentions, of making her subservient to his ambition or vices, she sheltered her own innocence by accepting the hand of old Mr. Flint, then in his seventieth year;

and in the full blaze of beauty, not being more than four or five and twenty, she appeared as a bride at Tarefield-hall. Mr. Flint at this period had four children. Oliver, his eldest son, was settled in Jamaica, had married there, and was the father of a family. Lucretia, the present despot at the hall, was single; but something older than the bride. Percival Flint, the second son, had just finished his academical studies, and had quitted Oxford. Mary Flint, the youngest of the family, was then about seventeen, and in one word, a *paragon of perfection*, for such my authorities proclaim her. Domestic feuds and discontents still kept their ground, in spite of the young mother-in-law; who, it appears, was little calculated to maintain even her own rights: she sunk into a nurse to her husband. Percival Flint left his father's house secretly, and for some years, whilst serving his country as an

officer in the marines, was supposed by the neighbourhood to have fallen a victim to misery. Mr. Flamall had an active part in all the transactions at this period. He was useful to the infirm father of the family, in managing his business; and his ill treatment of his own sister, gave him favour with Miss Lucretia Flint. Love now engaged in the struggle for power. A new curate, of the name of Howard, appeared at Tarefield. Miss Lucretia made love to him; and he made love to the beautiful Mary Flint. Here again I could fill volumes with the praises and blessings still given to this matchless pair! After many trials, and the utmost cruelty from the jealous sister, the lovers married. Mr. Flint's death is the next event. He left a will, which utterly excluded Percival Flint and Mrs. Howard, his darling child, from any portion of his property beyond a shilling. The Jamaica estate

became his eldest son's, and Miss Lucretia became the mistress of Tarefield-hall, with a large sum in money, some say, not less than thirty thousand pounds. The young widow had her provision of four hundred pounds per annum, for her life, on the Tarefield estate, and her name was not even in the will but in order to ascertain this claim. A new wonder succeeded to this. In a short time after the funeral, Mrs. Flint declared herself pregnant; and to the astonishment of every one, Miss Flint received the intelligence with joy, and observed, it was an event for which Mr. Flint had prepared her. She was happy; for it would now appear, that her father had chosen her for the stewardship of that fortune destined to be shared with a child who had not offended him. The odious title of mother-in-law was forgotten, and she called Mrs. Flint her *friend* and *sister:* by this *latter* appellation they still call each

other. Anxious for the preservation of the infant, Miss Flint removed her sister, whose health was in a very precarious state, to London. There Philip Flint was born; I need not add, that this posthumous child is the young man who pretends to Miss Cowley's hand. I have suppressed the affecting stories of Mr. and Mrs. Howard's difficulties, and their untimely death. They left a daughter, who is the idol of her parents' partial friends: till lately, she has lived with a wealthy farmer, where also boards her uncle Percival. She is now, I am told, noticed at the hall, and I believe she is under Miss Lucretia's protection. But to proceed.

"Soon after the birth of Philip, Mrs. Flint chose a second husband, and married Sir Murdock Maclairn, with whom she became acquainted during her residence in or near London. The baronet

was poor, and Mr. Flamall was for a time averse to this union; and for the reasons my Irishman assigns, namely, 'that Flamall knew of no standard by which to appreciate honour and intrepidity.' *Observe* here, that the Duke of —— gave me *this* observation, who formerly knew the baronet. Miss Flint, whose best actions are viewed only in one direction by the circle of her irritated judges, was however useful to the poor widow Flint on this occasion. The union was effected by her mediation, without an open rupture with the domineering brother. 'But she took care of herself, for she wished to attach Mr. Flamall, and conditioned for Sir Murdock and his lady, living with her at Tarefield, by which means the lover had a pretence for his visits.' I shall pass over this lady's supposed frailty, and the motives assigned for her not marrying the man whom she favoured. These are

contained in the following hints: '*They knew one another too well for that folly, &c.*' I have even continued to suppress the current report of the hall being haunted by the unquiet spirit of old Mr. Flint, 'who knows the will produced, was never made by him.' Compassion for Lady Maclairn has not been worn out. Her conduct to her unfortunate husband during many years infirmity of mind, nearly approaching to insanity, has obliterated the remembrance of her neglect of Mr. and Mrs. Howard, and every one concurs in believing, that, to her love and unremitting tenderness, the poor baronet stands indebted for his present amendment in his health and faculties. She has one son by her second marriage. It is enough that I say this young man is the reigning favourite here; for 'Malcolm Maclairn is in no favour with Miss Flint, or his uncle Flamall. I suspect he has more of his father's blood

in his views than suits his dependant fortune; for he has been from his childhood constantly attached to Percival Flint, and Miss Howard, the orphan child of Mary Flint, who is the admiration of the parish, and the cherished object of compassion.

"It is no unpleasing nor unprofitable reflection, my good friend, to trace in my gleanings relative to this family, the pure and genuine love of justice with which the heart of man is endowed by his gracious Maker. Neither the wealth nor station of Miss Flint have been able to screen her from the odium of those about her. Percival Flint has more homage paid him than if lord of the manor-house; and with the stipend annexed to an invalid captain of marines, a wooden leg, and his niece Howard in his hand, confers an honour on every cottage he enters. The farmer, at whose house they live,

has acquired an influence and authority in the parish beyond what his opulence would give him; 'for every thing has prospered with Mr. Wilson from the hour he sheltered Mr. and Mrs. Howard.' Such is the belief here.

"To conclude. It appears that Mr. Philip Flint has been carefully educated, and is a young man of spirit. The usual comments on him finish with, 'Aye he is too good for those to whom he belongs! they could not spoil him; but he will never be worthy to carry his brother Malcolm's shoes.' You will translate these expressions to this young man's advantage, for they bespeak his worth.

"Depend, however, on one thing as certain: Sir Murdock Maclairn is no fit instrument for cunning or baseness. His wife is an unoffending, depressed woman:

I am told she is highly accomplished. Miss Howard is now I find with her aunt Miss Lucretia. The captain occasionally visits the hall. The baronet is regaining his health; and Malcolm is a second Æneas. Whatever be the result of your measures, recollect that Miss Cowley is within my reach; and prepare her to expect a steady and vigilant protector.

"In your sincere friend,

"GEORGE WOODLEY."

CHAP III.

MR. Hardcastle read the above letter to his attentive hearer: he waited for some moments for her observations on its contents; but finding she remained silent, he said, "My dear child, recollect that you are not obliged to comply with Mr. Flamall's orders." "I have never for an instant supposed myself in his power," answered she calmly. "This account of his connections, however, gives me satisfaction, because it will serve to remove from your mind all fears for my personal safety. It is of no importance to me what are the characters of this Flamall's relations at present, it is

sufficient that they appear neither dangerous, nor interested in using me ill; for the rest I am prepared." "Be also prepared to be just," replied Mr. Hardcastle. "Mr. Woodley says his information rests on public rumour and public opinion. Your father knew Mr Philip Flint and Mr. Flamall: suppose, for a minute only, that his will was the result of that knowledge, and that the man he recommends to your notice is one that is worthy of you; without binding yourself to any conditions, you ought to see this young man whenever he arrives, and to listen dispassionately to whatever he has to plead, both for his honour and his pretensions. Consider him only as Oliver Flint's brother, and as standing remote from Mr. Flamall and the family at Tarefield. His affinity to worthless people, granting it be so, is no proof of his worthlessness; and surely the estimation in which he is held even by your

father's report of him, entitles him to a fair hearing whenever he appears at Tarefield." "I shall, whenever that happens," replied Miss Cowley, "receive him without resentment or caprice, and soon convince him that my resolution is unalterable." "And what answer am I to make to this letter?" asked Mr. Hardcastle, producing a renewed application from a young baronet in the neighbourhood. "If you will have the goodness to transmit my answer to Sir George," replied Miss Cowley, "you will oblige me; it is a brief one: I am an engaged woman; and should not this silence him, he will prove that he is not a gentleman, nor a man of sense.—To what purpose should I conceal from him, or the world," added she, throwing her arms around Mr. Hardcastle's neck, "an attachment in which I glory? To what purpose refrain from telling my father, and my friend, that I love Horace Hardcastle?

He knows that I love him, and have loved him for years." "My dear child!" said the subdued Mr. Hardcastle, tenderly returning her embrace, "endowed as you are, I would with pride acknowledge you as my daughter were you pennyless; but circumstanced as I am, I dare not listen to your pleadings. I am too old, and too tenacious of a good name, to risk it by a compliance so evidently in favour of my son's fortune: and you are too young, and too inexperienced, to know whether that compliance would secure to you the happiness it promises. I will imitate you in frankness: regard me as your best friend, not as Horace's father. Leave to time the discussion of a subject of which you are at present disqualified to judge. Horace, like yourself, is young, I advise you to avoid entering into any engagements with him till more acquaintance with life shall have decided his character and rendered

you a better judge of his merit. Remember also, that should you persist in cherishing the sentiments you now entertain of this young man, that you cannot give to your friends any apology for your preference more ostensible, than that of placing no temptation in the way of his integrity. It will be the only wealth he can bring to the account of yours; and although many will say it is nothing in the scale they judge by, *some* will be candid enough to confess, that virtue knows no inequality of condition. But let me say yet a few words more," added he; "and think you are listening to your *mother*, to that being who trained you to be what you are."—He paused for a moment.—"She would tell you, my dear Rachel, that there is no period of a young woman's life, in which she is less qualified to judge for her own happiness, than the one in which you are at present. You are under an

influence which renders your judgment weak. Unacquainted with vice, and with all the affections of nature and innocence glowing in your bosom, you give to imagination an office with which it ought never to be trusted; and to the lover it selects the qualities of your own pure heart. For a time, this delusion passes; but what is often the conclusion? Sometimes, a too late conviction that what had been cherished as a supreme *good*, is a certain *ruin;* and still as frequently, that what had been called a permanent affection, is discovered to be nothing more than a flight of youthful inclination. I may surprise you by saying, that, without any imputation on your principles, or degradation of your understanding, you may cease to love Horace Hardcastle." "Never!" exclaimed the impatient Miss Cowley. "We are not the children of folly, nor the slaves of passion! Read that letter

which I received from your son, and then judge of the basis on which our hopes rest. I have promised Horace to respect his father's honour, and to preserve his, and I will never write to him till I have your consent." "I am satisfied," answered Mr. Hardcastle, hastily rising to quit the room. "Oh hear me!" cried Miss Cowley; detaining him by his clothes: "as a *sister*, as to my *early friend*, surely now and then I may be indulged." "You shall want no information of his safety," answered the retreating Mr. Hardcastle, interrupting her and instantly retiring. "Inflexible man!" said she, bursting into tears. "Ah, would to Heaven that mother to whom he referred, lived to confute his arguments! She only knew Rachel Cowley—she only knew her Horace."

Relieved by this effusion of sorrow, her spirit took its natural bias, and

though disappointed in her wishes of gaining permission to write to her *brother* Horace, it may be at least conjectured, that the opposition she had been unable to conquer, did the lover no injury; for it is most certain, that she attributed Mr. Hardcastle's conduct to a pride and scrupulosity far removed from good sense, and deficient in kindness to her.

CHAP. IV.

MISS Cowley lost nothing of her firmness in relating the above conversation to her friend Lucy. "I must think Mr. Hardcastle too rigid," said she, "in prohibiting all correspondence between me and Horace; but I will obey him as my father. I leave you, my dear Lucy, but it is to defeat malice. The honour of Mr. Hardcastle is not less dear to me than my own, and I will prove to the world that I am qualified to judge, and to determine. I have now duties before me that will give solidity to my mind. My father has left two children besides myself, and convinced as I am, that Flamall is a villain, I will omit no

occasion of detecting his artifices. Sheltered under this roof, I can never do this; but by bending to his authority I may make him tremble. Should I fail in this purpose, I am still secure; for Horace will not want my father's wealth to make him happy; and when I am of age, it will depend on you to determine whether Mrs. Dawson's legacy to her grand-daughter is to be *a curse.*" Poor Lucy, unable to reply, only wept, and saw with bitter regret her friend's preparations for leaving Heathcot. A letter from Sir Murdock Marlain hastened her departure; and Mrs. Allen and Miss Cowley were escorted to London by Mr. Hardcastle a few days previous to the baronet's arrival, and took up their temporary abode at Counsellor Steadman's.

Few of my readers will refuse their sympathy to the dejected and faithful

guardian during this anxious period. With a father's apprehensions, Mr. Hardcastle saw youth and beauty torn from his protecting care; and with anguish of soul, did he now contemplate the traits of his pupil's mind, and the charms of her person; but of this person no more will be said, than applying to Rachel Cowley the poet's interrogation,

> Can Virgil's verse, can Raphel's touch impart,
> Those finer features of the feeling heart,
> Those tend'rer tints, that shun the careless eye,
> And in the world's contagious circle die?
>
> *Rogers's Pleasures of Memory.*

Having now brought my readers to the point in which my history may be said to commence, I hasten to place before them a correspondence, which will better serve my purpose than any talents I possess. I shall content myself

in future with supplying the few breaks I find in the narrative; and leave the reader to judge of my discernment in thinking the unstudied language of truth and nature better than any I could substitute in their place. Miss Cowley shall speak for herself.

LETTER I.

From Miss Cowley to Miss Hardcastle.

TAREFIELD, JUNE 24th.

THE short note which your father has, before this, delivered to you, and which I trust you have destroyed, my dear Lucy, as a proof unworthy to be preserved of your poor Rachel's little advancement in self-knowledge, shall, if it be possible, be rendered useful to me as a warning against presumption. But although I have been taught by experi-

ence not to think too highly of my wisdom, yet I mean not, Lucy, to give up the reins to folly. You will have no more despairing rhapsodies from me. The question has been decided, and reason tells me, that in a difficulty which admits of no other alternative but that of either laughing or crying, it is but to take that which will least disagree with my constitution. You have, my dear Lucy, called me many times a twin sister of my favourite Beatrice. Whether you meant to compliment me as having a portion of her wit, or meant to repress in me the superabundance of her spirit and flippancy, remains with you to settle. I am contented with the resemblance, and I will, if I can, preserve a light heart, and *her* disdain of fools and knaves. I will, however, effect my purpose of breaking through the web of mischief which now entangles me, without wishing "I were a man," or "eating

Mr. Flamall's heart in the market-place;" a more severe punishment will only satiate my vengeance. He shall *live* to feel the stings of a wounded conscience, and to see me *happy*.—But again Heathcot rises between me and my heroic intentions! Alas, my Lucy, it will, for a time at least, defeat every purpose of wisdom! I must weep! Its beloved inmates are before me! I see them silently glancing their humid eyes to my vacant place at their peaceful table; and, with looks of sympathy, pitying each other for the absence of their fondled, cherished Rachel. Who will now, my Lucy, defend you in your walks from the terrific cows? Who will now guard you from the wasp's approach? Who will now explore your path in your evening's ramble, and secure your timid footsteps from the tremendous frog? Alas! you have no Rachel Cowley to guard and to laugh at you! She is, and well may I

say, alas! and alas! far remote from these her accustomed and sweet duties! She is too remote, also, to hear the gentle and persuasive admonitions of her Lucy. Who is there *here* to repress with a smile my too volatile spirits, "to divert my petulance and check my pride?" Where am I now to seek that friend, whose approbation, like the dew from heaven, tempered my rough elements with her own simple and mild virtues? We were formed, Lucy, to be each other's aid and support. We are made for Heathcot and contentment. Will Mr. Hardcastle persist, think you, in thus defeating, as it appears to me, the designs of Providence? Oh no! nor can he long remain unconvinced that my father was incapable of defrauding his child of those rights of nature which he granted to his slaves. He cannot, Lucy, persist long in prohibiting Horace from writing to me. He must perceive the injustice, as well as

severity, of his present conduct. Never to write to the companion of my youth, to a *brother* endeared to me by a thousand and a thousand fond remembrances of pure and unimpassioned affection! Surely this is being too rigid! Such is not Mr. Hardcastle's mind. He will relent in compassion to himself. In this hope only can I find a relief from my present state of mind. I cannot, Lucy, support my plan of conduct with fortitude whilst I find your father thinks meanly of me; and is it not obvious, that he believes me weak and childish? Why am I not to be confided in? His honour is my own; Horace's disgrace would be my destruction; and, again I repeat it, I would not now marry your brother were the *world* your father so much dreads, to solicit me to be his wife. No, Lucy, Horace Hardcastle shall have no accounts to settle with my new *guardian*! Farewell, I cannot proceed. Mrs.

Allen's blessing and your Rachel's must not be omitted. She is contended with me, and bids me tell you that I am a very good girl. Will not this please you? You smile.

LETTER II.

Miss Cowley, in continuation.

TAREFIELD.

FINDING myself somewhat the wiser for a few hours repose, I will profit by the unavoidable delay of my yesterday's letter to add to its bulk, and to pour into your patient ear a larger portion of those thoughts which I know not what to do with till they are communicated to you. I shall therefore inform you, that I lost no time in giving Sir Murdock Maclairn a specimen of that damsel's *temper* whom it had cost him so many wearisome miles to seek. But I will be modest, and tell you also, that I had been spirited up to this

undertaking by Counsellor Steadman; for as he has no son to beguile me of my heart, and is too old himself to wish for more of it than he has, he was determined, without consulting your father, to see whether I could fight my own battles. Thus prepared, I asked the courteous baronet, before my dear counsellor, when he meant to commence his journey to Tarefield. A solemn bow prefaced his reply.—"He was at my directions on that point."—"Indeed," answered I, smiling, "you surprise me! I suspect my new guardian has ill-chosen you for his substitute. I fancy he would not altogether approve of your complaisance to your *prisoner*." He fixed his eyes on my face, but was silent. "I mean not to bribe you," continued I, "for you appear too indulgent to need it; but I do wish to make our journey to Tarefield pleasant; and that cannot be unless we travel as good friends. By a will now

substantiated as legal, and called *my father's will*, Sir Murdock, I am committed to the controul of a man, who, till within a few months, was a stranger to that parent I deplore, and to whose name and office was affixed a post at Mr. Cowley's writing-desk. It ought not to surprise you, therefore, if I think it necessary to act with *caution* under these circumstances. I am an entire stranger to Mr. Flamall's character and principles, and yet I am ready to accept of your house, Sir Murdock, as an asylum proper for me. But, understand me: motives absolutely remote from Mr. Flamall's power and authority over me, have induced me to give up a protection under which I have been safe and happy from my infancy. I trust to you *voluntarily*, for I believe you to be a man of honour. To Mr. Flamall I leave the provision he may judge necessary for his *master's daughter* whilst under your roof. If I am to give

credit to my partial friends, I am not capricious; but I am very jealous of my independence. Lady Maclairn, as well as yourself, Sir Murdock, must be told that I have *decidedly and firmly refused the husband* provided for me by my father's will. I expect to be exempted from all importunities on the subject of Mr. Philip Flint. These would not only tend to make my residence with you unpleasant, but also short; for I shall without delay convince Mr. Flamall that Rachel Cowley's person is not included in his *extraordinary* trust. I have only to add, that I am ready to set out whenever you please, and shall with cheerfulness attend you to an abode which I promise not to disturb by any discontents."

Sir Murdock, who had not for an *instant* taken his eyes off me, started when I ceased speaking, and for *several* moments

appeared extremely agitated; his countenance varied with the oppression within, and he paced the room once or twice in profound silence. At length, with collected firmness, he said, I had surprised him. "I am not prepared to answer Miss Cowley's suspicions of Mr. Flamall," said he, addressing the counsellor, "but I know that I have had no sinister views in coming hither. I have no designs either on her person or property; nor can I easily conceive that Mr. Flamall has. We were strangers till very lately, to all that regards this young lady. The proposed alliance was transmitted to us, as an argument in favour of the plan now under consideration. It produced the effect Mr. Flamall wished, it conquered our reluctance to receiving under our roof a stranger to our habits of life. These are so retired, that we naturally judged they could not be agreeable to a young lady; and we

should have persisted in our refusal, not Mr. Flamall pointed out to us propriety of the measure he recommended. If Miss Cowley, or Miss Cow friends, be not satisfied with what I asserted," added he, spreading his on his chest and colouring, "I w not for all the riches in the world her under my protection; but I hav to learn, that Sir *Murdock Maclair* been judged a fit agent for dishon His eyes were again turned on me, instantly softened, and I saw he trem "Say no more, my good Sir," cri with my usual eagerness, and takin hand, "I bless Providence for cond ing me to you, under the necessity w forces me to quit Heathcot. I will Lady Maclairn for *your sake*, and her, that I am grateful to you for h ing me with so much patience." N shall I forget him, Lucy, when wi countenance expressive of the utt

sensibility, he said to Counsellor Steadman with solemnity—"She will be safe as the child of my bosom. She will be guarded by a vigilance equal to your own and Mr. Hardcastle's. As a deposit sent by Heaven, I will receive her." Do you know that I was so affected that I wept, and repented of having urged him to this explanation. Mr. Steadman assured him, that he was perfectly satisfied, and the conversation gradually became less interesting. I mentioned with diffidence my friend Mrs. Allen. "My wife will rejoice to find you bring a companion with you," said he; "she fears that you will think Tarefield very dull. My bad health has produced a love of home in her, as well as myself, that will not easily be overcome." "Be under no fears on that head," observed I, smiling, "I am one of those profound philosophers who are never alone." He smiled in his turn at my vivacity. "You

will like my wife, Miss Cowley," said he, "she is the gentlest and the best of women. One so peaceable, that she will not quarrel with you for your barbarity to her son. I am not yet at home," added he with more cheerfulness, "therefore not yet *tongue-tied*; but permit me to assure you, that Philip Flint is not undeserving of your good opinion, though he may be too presumptuous in his hopes. I have, however, nothing to do with this affair," continued he; "having from his cradle strictly adhered to one rule of conduct, namely, that of leaving him to his tender mother's care, and the direction of his more immediate connections. Happily his education has not been neglected. But I was unequal to the duties of a father, even to *my own Malcolm*." His poor head mechanically sunk, and he took, greedily, three or four pinches of Scotch snuff. We finished by settling the hour of our departure;

for I found he wished to leave London.

My next letter shall place before you more particularly this *interesting* Sir Murdock Maclairn, the originality of whose person and manners has so powerfully excited my compassion and curiosity, that I cannot but bless fortune for throwing him in my way. He is no common character, Lucy; and the peculiar sadness which from moment to moment pervades his countenance, is to me inexpressibly touching. I should have detested a stupid laughing face for *le compagnon du voyage*, that conveyed me from *my Heathcot*; and as the next best thing to being happy oneself, is making others so, I forgot in my endeavours to make Sir Murdock comfortable that every milestone was to me a *memento mori*. It is yet rather problematical, whether I shall like his lady as well as I

do him. But I know not how it happens, that I am less disposed to fall in love with my own sex than with the other. I have loved, dearly loved, men old enough for my *great-great*-grand-father, but rarely have I been attached to *old ladies*. Must we acknowledge the truth, Lucy? We may as well; the poet has spoken it: "most women have no characters at all." So farewell, and be sure to love even the follies of your own Rachel Cowley, for they are not borrowed, at least, my dear girl. Supply for me kind words to Sedley.

LETTER III.

From the same to the same.

YOUR father's wisdom in hurrying you away to Barton-lodge, instead of permitting you to remain at Heathcot,

like another Niobe, dissolving in tears, is so like him, that it neither surprises me nor Mrs. Allen; and if the cheerful mistress of the most cheerful mansion contentment ever found, cannot comfort you, I shall be angry and chide my Lucy.

You tell me your father smiles, and refers you "to Rachel's pen" for all that relates to Sir Murdock Maclairn's first interview in town; "*he* (Mr. Hardcastle) being too jealous of the baronet's favour with me, to be impartial." In reply to Mr. Hardcastle I make him one of my best and most saucy curtesies; and tell him that I understand perfectly the cause of his *discretion* and *humility*. He is like many other sinners, willing to compromise matters with conscience, and to tempt others to do that which he dare not do himself, in order to share the

gratification of wickedness at a less price. How often have we seen him check his mirth and spoil a good story, by saying, "this is folly, neither the weaknesses nor the frailties of our fellow-creatures, my children, are proper subjects for mirth:" and yet he can lay a snare for me. However, I have neither his charity nor benevolent toleration, and think folly fair game. But I have not folly to laugh at, in the subject before me; yet, Lucy, in the dearth of all rational amusement, in a separation from all whom I love, do you think I can want an excuse for my pen, should it offend charity? Self-preservation is a duty no less obligatory than self-government; and as I am cut off from the banquet of wisdom, have I not a right to cater for myself? "Certainly:" and if I can live upon worse fare, and can be contented with what is wholesome, though not delicate, will any one blame me? "No:" well then, this privilege

being granted, please to understand, that neither my compassion nor good nature are yet starved out; for were that the case, Sir Murdock Maclairn would be the most unsuitable dish for the cravings of my hunger. It is, however, most assuredly true, that this gentleman's first appearance produced on me not only surprise, but the most powerful incitements to be *wicked.* Figure to yourself a very tall large-boned man, meagre as "pining atrophy;" high cheek-bones, which still more hollowed his sunk features; a complexion jaundiced by sickness and tinged by Scotch snuff, which he takes in immoderate quantities; a long crane neck, which is tightly bound with a narrow black stock; a few scattered hairs, which still maintain their carroty colour, tyed in a queue; a sunk, though broad chest, and a plaintive voice, in which however are cadences to please the ear whilst attending to an ar-

ticulation slow, and sometimes laboured. Add to this picture, an abstracted manner, and an air of sadness; and you will not be astonished that I should for a few minutes fancy Malvolio present, and that I looked for "his yellow stockings and cross garters." The eagerness with which he gazed upon me strengthened my imagination, and I did not dare to smile, lest I should hear him say—

"Thou canst not chuse but know who I am:
If thou entertainest my love, let it appear by thy smiling.——
Thy smiles become thee well."

At this moment my eyes encountered those of Sir Murdock's, and my heart smote me; for in language more touching than sounds of harmony could impart, they said, "Pity me, for I am the child of sorrow; respect me, for I am acquainted with grief." I blushed, and forgot Malvolio.

For several days, however, I could not reconcile myself to the *keenness* and peculiar attention with which these large blue eyes surveyed me. An expression in them of a famished look (I cannot better define its eagerness) yielded, as he continued to gaze on my face, to a melancholy softness, not unfrequently heightened by a tear; but I found that he was subject to an absence of mind, which it appears has resulted from many years bad health and low spirits. This, with his ceremonious demeanour, and the no inconsiderable degree of his national accent, render him peculiarly singular. Not expecting much amusement on the road with a companion to whom you may speak half a score times before he is sensible you expect an answer, I took care to provide myself with a book; and, by chance, I robbed the counsellor of Macpherson's Ossian. The united libraries of the ancient and modern world,

could not have better supplied me with an author calculated to rouse the attention of Sir Murdock. I was tempted to read aloud some passages, and he listened with a feeling that surprised me to the sorrows of Malvina. "Have you never read Ossian?" asked I. "If I have," replied he, "I have forgotten him during an indisposition that left me nothing but a capacity to feel my own wretchedness." A deep sigh and the depression of his head silenced me. He soon urged me for more of my book; but I was grieved that I had introduced to his acquaintance a work so powerfully calculated to "awaken fancy, and to touch the heart" of the poor baronet.

I cannot describe to you the enthusiastic bursts of feeling and admiration which followed every sublime passage I selected; and his tears flowed to the pathetic touches of the poet. "I will read

no more to you," said I, with good humour and closing the book: "Ossian is, to a mind like yours, a bad writer." "There is a joy in grief, when peace dwells in the breast of the mourner," answered he in a plaintive tone. "It may be so," replied I, "but the mourner ought to remember, 'that sorrow wastes him." "I do not attribute my faintness to grief," observed Mrs. Allen laughing, "but to downright hunger; and I must beg to stop at the next stage for something more substantial than Ossian." Sir Murdock instantly began his apology for his omission at the last inn. "I forgot," said he, "that every one could not like myself fast twenty-four hours without inconvenience. Early habit has made abstemiousness of no account with me," added he, "I have fasted six-and-thirty hours formerly, without experiencing any considerable diminution of strength." "Have you never thought

such a disregard to the wants of nature pernicious?" asked I, surveying with compassion his lank figure. "I had then other cares," answered he; "my soul, like that of Oithana, was not as careless as the sea which lifts its blue waves to every wind, and rolls beneath the storm." He fixed his eyes on my face, and spoke no more till we reached our destined post-house. Here Mrs. Allen's orders were quickly obeyed, and we pressed him to take some refreshment with us; and to judge by the voraciousness of his appetite, he must have exceeded his usual time of fasting. We were, however, too well pleased with the effects of ham and cold chicken on him, as well as on ourselves, to trust to his memory for a repetition of the cordial; and Mrs. Allen undertook the management of us for the remainder of the journey. The replenished baronet became more and more conversible as we

proceeded. He had even transient gleams of cheerfulness, and finding that I persisted in keeping back the "tales of the times of old," till he, like other poor mortals, eat three meals a day, he contented himself, and amused us by describing in glowing colours the grand and picturesque scenery he remembered in the western isles of his beloved Scotland; and with evident delight he traced a similarity of manners and customs between his country and ancient Greece, marking with precision the common features of resemblance that had struck him between the heroes of Ossian and Homer. From this learned dissertation he condescended to talk of France, in which country he had passed his youth. He praised my accent, and seemed pleased that I knew the language, speaking with rapture some passages from Racine. "Do you also understand Italian?" asked he. I replied; "As *a school-girl.*" He

smiled most graciously—I wish you could see him smile, Lucy! and with a suppressed sigh he said, "It may serve to fill up your time, my dear Miss Cowley, to accept of the assistance of '*a school-boy*' in this language; there was a time, when it was as familiar to me as my mother tongue, or the French; but my memory has been many years *lost* to me as a source of pleasure. A reverie succeeded to this observation, and Mrs. Allen and I insensibly retraced our steps and got to Heathcot-Farm. We talked of Lucy Hardcastle; when, to our surprise, the good baronet interrupted us by observing, that our friends at Heathcot had an advantage of which it was probable they were not aware. "Heathcot," added he mournfully, "will never recede from your mind whilst you are at Tarefield.—This is my fear: yet still I think you will be pleased with my Harriet. She is as gentle and pure-hearted as your

dear Lucy. She will be miserable, if she fail in making you comfortable." You will supply our answer." He continued to talk of his wife, and told us, that to her persuasions he had yielded reluctantly to undertake a journey which had separated him from her more hours, than for many years before he had been minutes: "but she thought," added he, "that it would be beneficial to my health and spirits; and these are of value to me, because essential to her happiness." He spoke with animation of her faithful love, and added, "She is now counting the hours till she sees me."

When arrived within five miles of Durham we left the road, and pursued our way through a flat country, unmarked by any thing cheerful; and reached Tarefield-hall at about eight o'clock in the evening of our third day's journey. The house, as we approached it, struck me

as having been originally built in that style, of architecture for which we are indebted to William the III. and Dutch taste; but as each successive proprietor conceived his own to be as good, and had money for its indulgence, it exhibits at present samples of all: turrets and chimneys: high roofs and flat ones; latticed bows and Venetian windows, and wings added to wings.

I find, however, many good-sized rooms within; and when we get acquainted with the five staircases, and as many thresholds, we shall, I believe, have seen all that is curious in the manor-house, commonly called Tarefield-hall. I must not, however, omit as its beauty, a noble avenue of elms and horse-chesnuts, the latter in full bloom, and which embellishes the dull scenery around. This avenue is flanked on each side by a rising plantation of some extent, and is

devoted to modern improvement; the walks are neat and trim, and it is filled with shrubs.

Now mark me, Lucy! here I am at Tarefield; and here does my history finish, unless you are good and tractable. Horace was not even named in your last letter.—This will not do. You had better not provoke me: I have rich materials before me, but I will have my price for them. Take in the mean time the kiss of peace from your

RACHEL COWLEY.

CHAP. V.

LETTER IV.

From the same to the same.

YOUR dear letter, in which I find you *can be reasonable* and good, was delivered to me yesterday, by a gentleman who lives in this neighbourhood; the Mr. Woodley, our Counsellor's correspondent. He is, I find, land-steward to the Duke ——, and resides at Bishop's-Auckland, the nearest market town from hence. He was frank and cordial in his offers of service, and we soon settled our terms of amity. He will be our postmaster, and from this time you may

swell your budget at your pleasure, and send it to Counsellor Steadman's. Our servants will carry mine to Mr. Woodley's, for we have daily intercourse with the market.

But now for your reward. It shall be ample, for I wish to encourage young beginners; and being positively convinced myself, that you may, without breaking any one commandment in the decalogue, fill a page with intelligence relative to my *brother* Horace, I do hope to convert you, and strengthen your faith in my tenets. A mistaken and punctilious observance of an injunction, which your father's *fears*, rather than his *reason*, have given you, would be downright sinning against friendship; so "look to your ways and be wise."

It was evident, that some ceremony

had been judged necessary for the reception of the heiress; and I was received with much form and some parade in the *best parlour*. But as nature had not been consulted in these arrangements, she chose to spoil them; for poor lady Maclairn, instead of remembering her compliments, rushed into her husband's arms and wept. It was no longer *Malvolio*, Lucy! No; it was the toil-worn *Ulysses*, soothing his faithful Penelope. The picture was complete; for an old spaniel was licking his feet at the moment. I cannot take a more favourable time for giving you a sketch of Lady Maclairn's person; for whilst her beautiful black eyes were still humid with tears of joy, and her delicate face suffused with the mixed emotions of contentment and a recollection of her neglect of the strangers, I forgot she was Flamall's sister.

I should judge Lady Maclairn to be nearly fifty years old; she is of the middle size and elegantly formed. Her beauty is of that sort which I have heard called *pure English;* namely, hair approaching to black, black eyes, and a complexion of the finest texture and colour. Her features are small and regular. She is extremely pale, but not with the hue of sickness; and it behoves Lady Maclairn to think aright, for every feeling of her mind is accompanied by a soft blush on her face. This, with a certain timidity and peculiar gentleness of manners, renders her appearance more feminine and youthful than matronly; yet she is graceful, and speaks with propriety and judgment. So far my conscience acquits me of malice.

She had no sooner finished her fluttered welcome, than she presented to me the Brobdignagian, Miss Lucretia Flint,

who, in a stiff green damask gown and petticoat, might have conveyed to a soberer imagination than mine the idea of a mountain clothed in the livery of spring; but on raising my eyes to measure its elevation, a stern countenance of "Burdoth's" sort intercepted my curiosity, and I caught only a glimpse of its snowy summit. She condescended to bend, and offered me her glowing cheek, which I approached with fear and trembling. In order to recover myself, I begged Sir Murdock to introduce me to his son, who had modestly kept at a distance. He made his bow; and we began to chat on the little occurrences of the journey. "You must have found it very tiresome," observed the stately Miss Flint, fixing her eyes on the contented baronet, "I am sure I have pitied you, Miss Cowley." "Pitied me!" repeated I, with an air of astonishment, "I wished our journey had been as long

again! and could Sir Murdock have forgotten the road to Tarefield, I would have kidnapped him, and made the tour of England." The saver of links and torches was silenced, and I talked with Malcolm Maclairn of a country and a route which he appeared to know perfectly.

Miss Flint at length with much gravity asked how long we should have to wait for supper. Mrs. Allen requested permission to retire to her room before it was served, pleading a slight sense of fatigue. The courteous mistress of the mansion accompanied us to the destined apartments, and with the utmost solicitude for Mrs. Allen's accommodation, urged her to have a maid-servant to assist her. This she declined; and I returned to the family party with her ladyship, well knowing that Mrs. Allen's *whim*, not the *headach*, was at the bottom of the business; for she will have it that

the spoiled child does not sleep unless she places the pillow.

Malcolm Maclairn is the image of his mother; but he is glowing with health, and his manly countenance is embrowned by air and exercise: I do not believe that Sidney's Arcadia has a handsomer shepherd than this village beau.

In a few minutes my attention was called from Malcolm, by the appearance of a beautiful apparition, which gliding softly by me, told Lady Maclairn that supper was served. She was retreating with the same light foot, when she hesitated, and courtesying to Sir Murdock, she said with gentle accents, she was rejoiced to see him. "Thank you, my dear Mary," was his laconic reply, at the same time taking her hand. As the beautiful phantom passed me, she blushed, and quickened her pace. "Good

Heavens!" cried I, "why, Sir Murdock, how has it happened that you did not prepare me for the sight of that angelic creature, now gone out of the room! I never beheld so lovely a girl!" "She is indeed, a very beautiful creature," answered Lady Maclairn in an under-toned voice. "She is Miss Flint's niece, and lives with her here." We moved to the supping room; and I eagerly looked for the niece, recollecting Mr. Woodley's history. "Do we not wait for the young lady?" asked I. "Oh, dear no," answered Miss Flint, commencing with a hot lobster, "Mary does not sup with us." Malcolm pursed up his rosy lips, as if to whistle, and his knuckles gave the tune of "The Babes in the Wood." I became tired in a minute, and as *dry* as the dry toast I swallowed. Willing to reserve my petulant humour for this ungracious aunt's sole use, I retired to my room as soon as the cloth was removed.

I found, as I had suspected, the indefatigable Mrs. Allen still engaged in arranging her *pet's* clothes. Before I could begin my lecture she eagerly asked me whether I had seen Miss Flint's orphan niece. "I never was more ashamed of a mistake in my life," pursued she; "but after you left me I began to unpack what I knew you would want in the morning. A maid-servant entered to take my orders for supper; she mentioned several things, but I requested a sandwich and a glass of table beer: these were brought and placed on the table. Some little time after, some one tapped at the door, and the prettiest girl I ever saw in my life entered with a small waiter, on which was a tart and some cream. "I have ventured to intrude, Madam," said she, "in the hopes that you may be induced to add something to your supper." She glanced her eyes to the sandwich, which had remained un-

touched. "Permit me to assist you," added she, placing her dainties on the table, "let me try to uncord that box whilst you take some refreshment." Thinking from her dress that she was a domestic, I complied and sat down to eat my supper: during this interval I looked at her with admiration; which soon changed to pity, when I saw how delicate she was, and what hands I had employed. "I beg," said I, "you will cut the cord, you seem no more equal to it than myself. You are not strong, my poor child; your labours, I trust are light here." She blushed, and her sweet eyes filled with tears. "My feebleness is a misfortune," replied she, "which I owe in part to the tenderness with which I was reared. I lament it, although my station in this family imposes no labour on me: I am Miss Flint's niece." I made a thousand excuses. "Indeed, Madam, you have given no offence," said she,

wiping her eyes. "On the contrary, I envy the condition of those in every class of life, who are able to fill up usefully that station to which Providence calls them; too much care, too much tenderness have, I fear, unfitted me for mine." She again dissolved into tears. "I should not have said thus much," added she, "for I have nothing to regret, but being a burden to my relations. Your residence here, however, would soon inform you that Mary Howard lost every thing at the death of her mother."

"My dear young lady," answered I, endeavouring to sooth her, and now observing that she wore a black cotton gown, "you must not despair; your loss has probably been recent; time will do" ——She interrupted me. "Oh, no!" cried she. The chamber door opened, and the chamber-maid hastily said, "My dear Mary, you forget how time goes;

your aunt will be enquiring." The poor girl took the friendly hint and hastily withdrew. I now employed the maid to untie the trunk, and, with my praise of Miss Howard, mentioned something of my error. "No wonder," said she, with honest indignation, "dressed as she is! But she is Mr. Howard's child for all that, and would be so in rags. Such relations! say I: I would weed in a ditch rather than owe my bread to such." A bell sounded, and the girl withdrew, saying, "You will soon see, Madam, that I am right."

. . . . . .

"Good God!" continued the anxious Mrs. Allen, "what will you do, my dear child, in a house where *a niece* envies the condition of a servant, and where a servant is kinder treated than *an aunt?*" "Do!" replied I, "why I will make those who are in it *blush.*" She shook her head, and I took it into mine that she

had not met with proper deference. The storm of passion was rising, Lucy; but I was pacified by Mrs. Allen's assurance that she had not been overlooked, and I found there had been no difference made in the accommodations prepared for the heiress and her *friend*. It was well; for, is she not my friend? Did not my dying mother give me to her? Did not yours bid me cherish her? and when I fail, may Heaven abandon me! Let these people dare to be impertinent, you will soon see us at Heathcot; at present, however, my anger flows only in one channel. My first employment here shall be to teach Miss Flint a lesson, and to shew her that Rachel Cowley abhors oppression.

I will finish this three day's journal by sending you a description of the damsel, for whom I mean to draw *my sword* should it be necessary; you will say it has an edge; so much the better when employed to correct cruelty.

In stature, Miss Howard is about my height, but in symmetry and proportion of form, so completely Grecian that you must look for her model in the gallery at Florence. To perfect the resemblance the more, she wears her light-brown locks, nearly flaxen, braided up and fastened round her head, whilst a black ribband confines the redundancy of the ringlets from covering her snowy forehead; her eyes are the darkest blue I ever saw, and, perhaps, to their colour it is owing that I never yet saw eyes so expressive at once of spirit and softness: at one moment they make their appeal to the heart by the imploring look of infant-trust and confidence; at another, they bespeak a soul within, equal to the duty of checking insolence; but these emanations are transient, and a melancholy expression of tenderness, rather than of sorrow, more commonly beams from them. To what shall I liken her

complexion? I can find nothing but a white rose newly refreshed by the dew of heaven: its delicate smoothness and modest blush exactly correspond with Mary's skin; for its tints would confound the painter to imitate; her smile would convert frenzy to peace, though lost on Miss Flint's flinty heart; and her voice would soften the tigress when robbed of her young.

I know what you will say: "This is a sketch in Rachel Cowley's style, when compassion guides her pencil. It is a thousand to one that this poor girl is any thing more than a pretty one; her youth and depressed fortune have lent their aid to an imagination that always employs vivid colours. We must place Miss Howard's picture by the side of Miss Flint's." Do so, Lucy; the time may come, and I hope will come, when you

shall recant, and the triumph of truth shall be that of your

RACHEL COWLEY.

LETTER V.

From the same to the same.

WITHOUT entering into your comments on the power of bribery when in such hands as mine, I will content myself with my influence over an affection which can be just to friendship and yet faithful to duty. I appeal to your understanding, Lucy; has there been one wish to render your good offices hurtful to your father, or pernicious to Horace and myself, yet offered to ensnare you? I have a right to hear of his welfare; and by detailing the little occurrences which mark our respective existences, you are

doing no harm. Your conditions are accepted with joy, as the means of producing comfort to my *brother*. You shall have my day-journals, and night-journals, if you will; my very dreams shall be sent you. Ah! would to Heaven you could give me Horace's!

To begin, however, with your "*method*." My first night's repose at Tarefield was disturbed by Mary Howard's image and my own fretfulness. The dawn of day presented to my sight Solomon, in his judgment-seat, who grinned upon me with an aspect not less savage than that of the two viragoes who held the sprawling boy between them; for, sooth to say, no one could have traced the mother's features, or the clemency of the judge in the mass of worsted employed; and I believe the face of the lions that decorated the ascent to

the throne, was the common one for the whole multitude of countenances that filled the room. Weary of looking at this odious tapestry, I arose, and explored my way into the garden. Here, indeed, I found the sweet perfumes of nature and the god of day; but for the rest let the poet speak—

"Grove nods at grove, each alley has a brother,
And half the platform just reflects the other;
The suffering eye inverted Nature sees,
Trees cut as statues, statues cut as trees."

This being too much in the style of the tapestry in the bed-chamber, soon tired me; and seeing the servants about, I sauntered into the avenue. Here the horse-chesnut trees, in all their pride, attracted my attention for a few minutes; but I was soon allured towards an object still more inviting. Mary was before me, walking with the light-foot of a Dryad, and your not inactive friend bounded

after her. Exercise and surprise heightened the vermillion in her cheek, and with a sweet and graceful modesty she saluted me with the usual compliments. I gave the reins to my heart, and it was not idle. She said I was very good; that indeed it would greatly enhance to her the pleasure of walking in a morning, if she were *permitted* to attend me, but her aunt frequently wanted her services. She would, however, endeavour to gain an hour sometimes, for the honour of walking with me. A certain trepidation and looking on all sides marked some fear; and I was on the point of encouraging more confidence, when we saw the baronet approaching us. He was wrapped up in an old plaid morning gown, his head enveloped in a black silk cap, and his attention was engaged by clearing a tattered silk sash from the interposing brambles. He started on seeing me, and would, I believe, have retracted

had not my voice detained him. On accosting him his poor sallow face was in confusion, and with a forced smile he asked me whether he had not frightened me, glancing his eyes to his uncouth habiliments. I took his arm, and rattled over some account of my having frightened Miss Howard. He became easy and cheerful, and told me that Mary and he had very often an assignation to keep in the avenue at too early an hour for the business of the toilet. The turret clock sounded eight, and Mary left us. You may suppose she became the subject of our conversation. "She is," said he, "as faultless in mind as in person; my wife says she is the image of her mother's pure and now beatified soul; but that she is also like her father, not only in her person, but in a firmness of character which her mother wanted. Her parents were unfortunate," continued he, with his usual depression of voice and head

when afflicted. "She is in the hands of an aunt who hated them; a woman naturally harsh and violent. We cannot controul her power, without danger to ourselves; but we suffer deeply from being the witnesses of this poor girl's mortifications. My wife, Miss Cowley, is a mother; her son Philip is Miss Flint's favourite; she has called him *her heir* from her cradle, and she has exacted in return from his mother, a submission which has annihilated even the wish of being independent. She is gentle, humane, and unambitious, but she is—a slave——! These domestic grievances will not long escape your observation. I am passive; for my Harriet wishes me not to interfere. I only dread lest you should despise us." "Be assured, Sir Murdock," answered I with seriousness, "that this fear is groundless; I am more disposed to pity than to blame. As a stranger I remarked Miss Flint's ungracious and

petulant manner, and I honestly confess I pitied *her*. She might yet be corrected; a little wholesome contradiction is all that is necessary." "You have only to try an easier experiment," replied he, smiling, "and you will succeed by only engaging to marry her idol." "Were I but privileged," answered I, "you should see her perfectly tamed by my employing nothing more than her own arts of tormenting. I doubt not but in the first instance *her idol*, as you call her young brother, secured his power in this way." "Indeed you are mistaken," said he, "Philip Flint was ever mindful of his own honour, though grateful for an affection, unbounded in its liberality to him."

Lady Maclairn's appearance prevented more. She came to summons us to breakfast, and with the utmost frankness told me that she had been to pay her respects to Mrs. Allen, who was very busy with

her band-boxes, and had ordered a breakfast and a maid-servant into her apartment. She conducted me, whilst chatting, to the "Old Wing," in which Miss Flint more particularly holds her state; and we found her richly decorated, and waiting for us at a tea-board most splendidly set out. Sir Murdock had mechanically, I suspect, followed our steps, and entered the room with us. Miss Lucretia's face flushed a deeper dye. "Good God, Sir Murdock!" exclaimed she, you are enough to frighten one in *that trim.*" "Did I frighten you?" asked he in a plaintive tone, and with a look which would have softened any Flint but the one before him. He was retreating. "I will have no infringement of our treaty of amity," cried I gaily, and gently placing him on the sofa beside me. "It is my turn to frighten you to-morrow morning, by shewing myself in my wrapping gown

and night-cap. We have nothing to do with ceremony and constraint: let those have it who fancy they are never dressed without white-fingered gloves." I glanced my saucy eyes on Miss Flint's starched muslins; she perceived the application, but I was *en train;* and affecting to be hungry, I took a roll and divided it between my silent neighbour and myself; and finding Lady Maclairn was to preside at the silver tea-board, I impatiently begged a cup of chocolate. Then, with well-counterfeited recollection, I said, "But where is Miss Howard? she is better entitled to her breakfast than I am, for she was walking before me." Mary does not breakfast with me," replied Miss Flint, "she has it in her own room." "I am glad I have so good a precedent to produce for my humour," answered I, "though it deprives me of present pleasure; I also usually breakfast in my own room, for I regard an hour

in the morning as the most precious in the day. But as a stranger," added I, smiling, "may I presume to ask when, and at what hour, I may hope to see this beautiful creature? Does she dine also in her own room?" This question was answered with much haughtiness. "As a stranger, Miss Cowley," said she gravely, "it may *surprise* you, to find so near a relation of mine under restrictions which I *deem* proper. Mary knows my views; these extend no farther than to make her useful, and to qualify her for the station in life which the imprudent conduct of her parents has destined her to fill. She must be humble. "Besides," continued she, relaxing into more civility, "your praises of her beauty quite alarm me, and would turn her silly head. She is young, and vain and silly enough to think herself a very pretty girl." "Why, my dear Madam," asked I, "laughing at the extreme gravity of this remark,

"how in the name of common sense, can Miss Howard think otherwise of a face and a person so exquisitely formed, and so consonant to every idea she can have of beauty and grace?" "Oh, as to that point," answered she with a toss of her head, "she will soon discover, if her pride do not stand in her way, "that beauty is all fancy, and the face she worships may not be thought worth a second look by another." "I grant," answered I, "the justness of your observation in a general way: I know that our ideas of beauty are in many instances local, and depend on taste; I will do more, I will grant, that in many parts of the habitable globe Miss Howard's personal charms might be regarded as *deformities:* but as she is in a country which secures her from any competition with flat-nosed, long-eared, and black-skinned beauties, I do not see how you can prevent her knowing that she is peculiarly

endowed with those external advantages, to which her situation and the acknowledged taste and opinion of those around her, have given the power of attraction and the tribute of admiration." "You may say what you will," replied Miss Lucretia, with an asperity of tone in unison with her harsh features;" but I wish from my soul this poor girl had no beauty. We have had enough of that perishable commodity in our family! Besides," added she, softening her voice, "you appear to have overlooked a lesson which every handsome girl ought to know. I have heard many *sensible men*, Miss Cowley, observe, that the best sauce for the relish of beauty, is the *ignorance* which the possessor has of its power to call forth admiration, or to attract notice and favour." "I should have told 'your sensible men," replied I, "that I well knew the taste for 'Moliere's Agnes' was not yet worn out.

Ignorance is more friendly to the sensualist than to the moralist; and I always suspect those who wish to see a young woman unconscious of her own advantages. It is also, in my opinion, illiberal, and unjust to conclude that a woman is vain because she is handsome. A weak understanding has, in numberless instances, given to even ugly and deformed women a conceit of themselves, which is as pitiable as it is ridiculous; and we see them daily exhibiting faces and persons with the most entire persuasion of their being attractive, which excite only disgust and ill-natured animadversions. No, no, Madam," continued I, "beauty does not of necessity make a woman a fool; a plain understanding and a very little experience will teach her to appreciate it justly; but she will, and she ought to bring it into that account of gratitude she owes to her Maker; for it is a good gift, inasmuch as it renders

us pleasing in the eyes of our fellow-creatures, and conciliates that affection which would otherwise be languid and careless."

The baronet had not apparently given his attention to one word of this conversation, for though his eyes were fixed on me, he seemed totally absorbed in his own reflexions. "You have not listened to this debate, my dear Sir Murdock," observed his wife, pressing his passive hand, "otherwise I would call upon you as umpire between the contending parties." "You are mistaken," answered he smiling, "I have not lost a syllable of what has passed, and my decision is ready. No adventitious advantages will engender conceit or vanity in a mind that has solidity, and that rests upon those principles which alone can bestow *real excellence* and produce *permanent esteem*. But I am curious to know by what means Miss Cowley has acquired the wisdom to estimate so justly an

advantage which it must be confessed, with her face and at her age, one would not have expected."—"I will convince you," replied I with gravity, "that if I am not vain, it is because I am proud. I was educated by a woman, who, to good sense, joined every virtue that adorns the female character. Her example, as much as her precepts, contributed to form me: and such was her influence, that to resemble Mrs. Hardcastle was the purpose of my life, even before I was qualified to judge of her merit, or to measure the ascent I had to gain in my approaches to her perfections. Mrs. Hardcastle was a handsome woman; but she was neither vain nor affected. Yet I will confess, I wished to be as handsome as Mrs. Hardcastle, who was indeed a beautiful woman; for I particularly noticed the consideration her elegant person produced before strangers. But a lesson, which I still remember, checked, it may

be, the vanity of the girl. I was, when about twelve or thirteen years old, one morning alone with my mother, as I called Mrs. Hardcastle, when our reading was interrupted by the visit of a neighbouring gentleman, who had however been some months on a tour. No sooner had he received the frank and easy welcome of Mrs. Hardcastle, than he examined me; and with the most elaborate praise spoke of my improvement, growth, and *extraordinary beauty*. During these commendations, which, although they made me blush, did not offend me, my maternal friend was good humouredly caressing his dog, which was a very ugly cur. "You have not lost your enthusiasm for beauty I perceive," observed she smiling. "But what is become of your pretty Italian grey-hound? and how happens it that her post is filled up by this miserable looking animal?" "I would not give that dog," replied he,

"for an hundred Italian grey-hounds, each more beautiful than Fidèle. She was not worth the keeping, except as a plaything to my little nephew: but this dog has qualities which are inestimable." Mrs. Hardcastle laughed, and turning towards me said, with that sweetness which so distinguished her, "You see, my dear girl, the *worth of beauty* when unfriended by *useful talents*: remember poor Fidèle, and take heed to be something better than a play-thing for a *school-boy*." I did not forget this lesson, and it was the more useful to me, from finding, in the gentleman's subsequent visits, that whether it was a piece of old china, a tulip, or a young lady's eyes or complection, he was equally liberal of his praise, and employed much the same language. I was therefore offended by his encomiums; and I am become so proud and fastidious on this point, that I always think the compliments paid to my per-

son, include a sarcasm on my understanding."

"All this argues nothing against my opinion," said the inflexible virgin. "With your understanding, beauty may not be a dangerous gift, but in ninety and nine instances out of a hundred it is so, and leads the possessor into danger." "So you may say of health, of spirits, of intellectual endowments, nay, even of life itself," replied I; "for each in its turn is abused by the folly and passions of a mind unchecked, and uncultivated. But our neglect of a blessing does not lessen the value of the gift; and for my part, were I in your place, I would recommend to Miss Howard, in the enumeration of those mercies she owes to her Maker, *gratitude* for a form and a face which open to her every bosom in which humanity resides."—"You ought to be very pious indeed," replied she, with an air of pique, "for most assuredly there is no compa-

rison between your beauty and Mary's. She has a pretty baby-face"——"For charity's sake stop there," cried I, "I am contented with my face at present, but I do not know what your comparison may produce. I think it too good a one to be mended by cold cream or Spanish wool; and I know it is too honest a one for a deceitful heart. As a good title page I am thankful for it, and I will take heed that the work within shall not disgrace it, when read by the eye of truth."

What, my Lucy, could occasion the deep blush which suffused Lady Maclairn's countenance when I said this, merely with a view to finish a conversation I was weary of, and which detained me from going to Mrs. Allen? I had risen from my seat whilst speaking, and saw a tear escape from her eye. Would a mind unacquainted with guilt have felt so random a dart? I know what will be

your answer. However, it was evident I had touched a sensitive plant; and my retreat was necessary. I reminded the baronet of his promise to assist me in arranging our books, without any diminution of my gaiety. "Do with me what you please," replied he, "so that I am not in your way: but shall I not surprise Mrs. Allen by my appearance?" He glanced his eyes to his tattered gown. "We will run the hazard," said I, passing my arm through his, "for it is ten to one but she is in her night-cap, and chiding my idleness." He smiled. Lucy, I would you could see this man's countenance when thus lightened up! Surely, never did Heaven more graciously decorate the face of woe! It is with an expression, which not only awakens compassion, but which also produces reverence."

As I had foreseen, Mrs. Allen had made our task light. It was well she

had; for to say the truth, the baronet was so entirely engaged by Humphrey Clinker as to forget his office altogether. Lady Maclairn soon after found Mrs. Allen and myself busily engaged in our work. She with alacrity assisted us, and, with a look of sweet and composed tranquillity directed to her husband, she said, in a half whisper, "Are you aware, my dear Miss Cowley, that I am incurring a debt which I can never pay? Heaven, who appears to have commissioned you to heal the broken-in-spirit, can alone recompense you. But you will know more of the being you will save; and you will understand that my gratitude must need language, for I have not words that can express my feelings." She pressed my hand with fervour. "What will you say," continued she, "when I tell you that he has been inquiring after his turning-wheel, and talking to me of renewing an em-

ployment in which he formerly delighted! You are the spring of his activity; he means to make you a reading-desk. Are not these blessed indications of his amendment?" I found no difficulty, Lucy, in translating Lady Maclairn's language or expression while she was thus speaking. She loves her husband. *Time*, your grand specific, will settle my opinions as they relate to this lady; in the meanwhile, I cannot well account for her secret in making me like and dislike her by turns. Sometimes she appears the most artless and ingenuous of her sex; her conversation becomes animated, and her thoughts flow with a frankness as unpremeditated as your giddy Rachel's. The next hour I see her, she is silent and ceremonious, conceding to all that is done, tremblingly alive to all that is said. To-day she offended me at dinner. Miss Flint sharply reprimanded her niece, for not being in the room before the last bell rang.

The innocent creature mildly said, she had been in the garden with Sir Murdock, who had detained her. Why was Lady Maclairn silent? Ought she not to have checked Miss Flint in the display of an ill humour, for which the cause was so trifling? I wish to see more of a decided protection in her manner to this poor girl. Her civility does not content me, and I sometimes fancy there is a *servility* in her observances, that marks a little mind.

I have well earned my promised recompence. I shall expect a long detail of Horace's adventures by sea and land: if you fail, farewell to your gossiping historian,

RACHEL COWLEY.

CHAP VI.

LETTER VI.

From the same to the same.

SINCE my last, I have had some conversation with Mr. Malcolm Maclairn, which, as it interested me, will make the subject of my present lucubrations. He returned home last night from an excursion which almost immediately followed my arrival here. I met him this morning in the garden, and he joined me. After civilly apologizing for an absence from home so soon after I was his mother's guest, he said, his father had not been for many years in a state of health

which admitted of any interruption by business. "But," added he, with seriousness, "with what satisfaction do I now devote my time to his ease and comfort, when I compare his present condition with the sufferings of his mind that I have witnessed! This morning he was not only curious to learn the success of my little journey, but conversed with me on the subject of it with precision and interest. In time his long habits of seclusion and indolence will yield to the natural energy of his character, and the activity of his mind. I have cherished this hope, Miss Cowley, from the hour I was capable of reflecting on the nature and operations of my father's malady. I never could believe he was what he was called, nor that his case was incurable lunacy. The event has justified my opinion. After many years of suffering under the most afflicting hypochondriacal attacks, he was suddenly seized by a

violent fever, which for many days baffled medicine, and repressed every hope; the crisis was favourable. We were prepared to expect not only extreme weakness in his bodily powers, but also that debility of mind which inseparably belongs to a state of nearly renovated existence. He remained for a time a mere infant; but we perceived that with his increasing strength, his mind was clear from those gloomy images which had so long obscured it. He continued to gain strength; but unfortunately his memory, too faithful for his advantage, represented the scenes which had passed. He became painfully susceptible to a sense of humiliation the most unfriendly to his perfect recovery. No arguments could prevail on him to appear, even before the servants of the family, for a considerable time, lest he should terrify them; and his persuasion was so strong that he was disqualified to appear in society,

that my dear mother ceased to importune him on the subject. Unsupported, and I may add, friendless as we are on the side of connections, no efforts were made to combat opinions which were more the result of extreme delicacy and habitual indulgence, than of a still disturbed imagination. I was convinced that my father wanted only a stimulus sufficiently powerful to rouse his mind, and to recover his native powers of acting. About this time, we received Mr. Flamall's letters, with his plan of your becoming an inmate at the hall. My father was extremely averse to the proposal. He affectingly drew a picture of himself, and with tears appealed to his wife to determine whether he was a fit object for the observation of a girl who had no acquaintance with misery, and who would shun him as an object of dread and disgust, or laugh at his eccentricities. Miss Flint's wishes were an-

swered with firmness. 'He should quit Tarefield.' I had arguments more potent.—Let it suffice for the present," continued Malcolm with emotion, "that *I know Mr. Flamall;* and that my father knows him to be a villain. I urged, and seriously urged, that by his rejection of the proposal Flamall had made, you might fall into less honourable hands; that he might, by an apparent acquiescence circumvent designs, which, as originating in a mind devoid of every principle, must be liable to suspicion. 'You may not,' added I, 'be able altogether to redress the grievances which this young lady will have to endure under the controul of such a guardian; but under your protection she will be secure. Convince Miss Flint, and let Mr. Flamall understand, that you are no longer the 'idiot,' 'the lunatic,' they have proclaimed, At no period of his life was Sir Murdock Maclairn better qualified to

become the defender of innocence. My arguments prevailed, and his journey to London to receive you, was determined on. My poor mother's spirits sunk into terror. She resolved to attend Sir Murdock, and urged with many tears, the danger of his going by himself; but I was resolute. It was indispensibly requisite to renew in my father's mind a confidence in his own strength, and to permit him experimentally to feel that he was a rational being, and fully competent to the care of himself and of you. He departed alone; and with a solicitude and terror which I will not attempt to describe. I followed his carriage. I had the comfort of finding on the road, that although the singularity of his manners excited curiosity, no one called in question his faculties of action, or suspected he had been deranged. I lodged at the same coffee-house in which he did, and slept in the next room to him. I

followed his footsteps, and watched his return from Counsellor Steadman's by means of a young man who was in his office. From this gentleman I also learned, Madam, some particulars relative to your situation at Mr. Hardcastle's, and, with this information to appreciate justly, your character, and that of the friends from whom you were to be separated. I reached the hall not more than two hours before your arrival, with the unpleasant conviction on my spirits, that you would experience under its roof many privations of your accustomed enjoyments. But I also knew, that nothing would be omitted on my mother's part to render your banishment from your friends as easy and as secure as possible. —This mother," continued Malcolm, " you must love; for she merits your esteem, and you are just. No language I can employ can describe her conduct as a wife or a mother. Judge then of her grati-

tude to you, for the humane and delicate attention you give to a husband, for whose sake and for whose comfort she has lived! You will no longer be surprised, my dear Madam, by the singularities of Sir Murdock, or at the retirement in which we live.—Observe those grated windows," continued Malcolm, directing my notice to two in the attics, "in that apartment did my mother, like an angel of peace administer every tender, soothing balm to the desponding and disturbed imagination of her beloved, idolized husband! There it was, Madam, that I perceived from time to time the emanations of a mind which neither sickness nor sorrow could entirely extinguish. There it was, that I saw the spirit of a Maclairn struggling with affliction, and nobly sustaining its claims to the meed of virtue!"—He spoke with an animation which proved his affinity to his father.—"Need I," pursued he,

"recommend to Miss Cowley the continuance of those acts of kindness which have already produced the most flattering hopes to my dejected mother's spirits. She tells me Sir Murdock delights in your society, and that he talks of you as a blessing sent to comfort her, and to heal him." "God Almighty grant it may prove so!" said I, with fervour. "To be an agent in such a work would make a prison pleasant to me! But I find nothing at Tarefield," added I, "to put my philosophy to the trial. I am perfectly contented in my banishment, except on one point; and I bespeak your good offices, Mr. Maclairn, to remedy this grievance. Contrive to conquer Miss Flint's dread of my being an improper associate for her niece. From the precautions that are used, I should have thought those grated windows to have been poor Miss Howard's boundaries."—"She is another of my dear mother's cares," replied Mal-

colm with eagerness——"But see, Lady Maclairn approaches." He bowed and turned towards the gate, whilst I quickened my steps to meet her Ladyship. "I come a petitioner," said she with cheerfulness; "my husband wants to see you, and to have your recommendation of another book. I dread lest he should become too importunate; but only give me a hint, and I will prevent his intruding." "Let me at once," answered I, taking her hand, "tell you, in unequivocal language, that my enjoyments at Tarefield are so dependent on Sir Murdock, that *I* shall have no spirits, but in proportion as I find myself useful to the return of *his*. From the first day we met, I promised that we should be mutually useful to each other. He shall teach me wisdom, and in requital I will endeavour to cure him of his indolence." "God will reward you!" said her Ladyship, with emotion.—"The endeavour alone," answered I, "will be a recom-

pence; yet I am on the point of shewing you I can be selfish. I entreat you to assure Miss Flint that I am a very harmless young woman, and that she may with safety permit her niece to be familiar with me."—"Would to Heaven," said she, "it was in my power, Miss Cowley, not only to oblige you in this request, but also to convince you of my own opinions, as they relate to this amiable girl! But I can only deplore her aunt's harshness of temper. I have neither the authority nor the influence necessary to remedy the evil. Lucretia must be left to the bitter experience which will result from her temper; and Miss Howard must be satisfied with knowing, that she is not the only one under this roof who suffers from its caprices. I am this poor girl's friend, but I cannot lessen the oppression under which she lives, although I abhor it." The Baronet appeared, and I thought his wife was not displeased by the relief his presence brought her. He gladly ac-

cepted my invitation to breakfast, and it was no sooner finished than he became so engaged with a book as to resemble a statue.

You say you do not yet know where to find me, should you be favoured with the gift of the renowned *Puss and her Boots*, and take it into your head to *step* from Heathcot to Tarefield. Conceiving that, in the fancy of the moment, your imagination had conquered the difficulty of the staircases and thresholds, I will in my turn, fancy you are now in my *domicile*. My apartment forms the south wing of this irregular building, in which are two specious parlours, which command the east and south, by which means I have the avenue and the garden for my solace. But on discovering that Lady Maclairn had, from indulgence, a more peculiar privilege in the appropriation of these rooms to her own use, I have insisted on their being regarded as *hers*;

and I have erected my throne of independence on the second floor, where the rooms are correspondent, only divided into three. It is in the south room you must look for your Rachel Cowley: but you may, if it please you, imagine you are still at home; for all in this *sanctum sanctonum* is *Heathcot*. My work-table, the drawings we did together, Horace's biographical chart—*all* present to my mind those

> "Friends of reason, and my guides of youth,
> Whose language breath'd the eloquence of truth;
> Whose life beyond preceptive wisdom taught,
> The wise in conduct, and the pure in thought."

To gratify Sir Murdock, who by no means relished my preference of the second floor for my domain, I have placed my books and the piano-forte in one of the parlours, which has wonderfully domesticated us to that room. He is too well bred to intrude on my private hours; but he often induces me to shorten them, for there is a

pleasure which belongs to sympathy; and when I see the poor baronet's eyes brighten at my approach, I feel the gaiety which I often assume, settling into contentment. Have I said enough to satisfy your curiosity? Will it not be my own fault if I am dissatisfied with a prison regulated by order and neatness, and inhabited by people who wish to make it pleasant? I promise you, Lucy, that I will be all you wish me to be; but I must have intelligence of our dear wanderer. Neither Tarefield-hall, nor *Heathcot* itself, would content me, without this indulgence; and, to say the truth, I would rather be the "Wet sea-boy" in Lord William's yacht, "even when the visitation of the winds takes the billows by the top," than dwell in a terrestrial paradise. But this is the romance of a girl! and as Solomon, from the next room, is glaring his large eyes on me, I will profit from the admonition they give me, and

close this letter and my own eyes for the night. Heaven will, in its mercy, receive the petition I offer for all that is dear to Rachel Cowley, for in that confidence do I live.

P. S. Mrs. Allen bids me tell you that she finds Tarefield has a worse report than it deserves. It is haunted only by *one* unquiet spirit, and that may be said of nine hundred and ninety-nine houses out of a thousand. She has, by her usual address, found the means of quieting this nuisance as it approaches her; for Miss Flint affects to have a great veneration for Mrs. Allen's judgment, particularly in physic, in which she is-or seems to be an adept. I heartily wish she may be converted to Mrs. Allen's creed, of being "good to all," it would do more for her weak *nerves*—could you but see this woman!—than a course of valerian and bark.

LETTER VII.

From the same to the same.

OBEDIENCE in most cases is the best test of love; and as you *command* me, my Lucy, to continue faithfully to detail all the *minutiæ* of my domestic comforts, till you are certain I want only you, I will continue to please you. In time you will, I presume, wish for other subjects; and I beg you will point out to me the means of attaining any more important than my present one. What think you of my studying heraldry, for the purpose of amusing you? I should have a good preceptor in Sir Murdock; he frequently descants very learnedly on armorial bearings, and with much philosophical precicion traces the influence of "*blude,*" from the father to the son, for centuries past. According to Sir Murdock's favourite hypothesis, every cardinal virtue depends on having "*gude blude*" in our

veins; but a truce with nonsense. I believe the good people I am with will please me in all essential points. They have already forgotten that I am a *stranger*. Miss Flint has put aside her damask gown and laced suit, and I saw her this morning walking in the garden, in a *dishabille* not far removed from dirty negligence. By the way, the baronet now exhibits a new wrapping gown with Morocco slippers; and as we walk before breakfast, he usually continues to take that repast in the parlour with us. This hour is gradually becoming useful to him, and his wife also, for she appears to enjoy it as much as he does. I am now convinced that I have innocently occasioned to Miss Howard the privation of her morning exercise. I caught a glimpse of her to-day in the garden, and instantly availing myself of the opportunity, took a direction which led me to her. When remote from the windows, I at

once entered upon the subject of my fears, and told her that I had been vexed and disappointed by not seeing her in the avenue. "I must not abridge you of liberty," added I, "and unless your aunt becomes more reasonable, I shall lose my temper. What can be the humour she gratifies by opposing my wish to enjoy your society?" The poor girl was confused.—"You are very kind, Madam," replied she, "but my situation here does not admit of the honour you wish to confer on me. I have to learn many things, and my time is necessarily engaged by my duties. I have unfortunately been reared with too much tenderness for the station of life to which Providence has destined me, and it is sometimes difficult for me to forget."—She could not proceed.—"Say rather," observed I with indignation, "that it is difficult for you to bear, unmoved, a cruelty which disgraces your

aunt, and will destroy you."—"Indeed," answered she, with an alarm which surprised me, "your generous nature and sympathising temper have misled you. My aunt is not cruel: she thinks I want a discipline to fit me for the world and a low condition of fortune. Perhaps she judges right. In the mean time, I would not, on any account, give her room to imagine that I am discontented or ungrateful for the shelter she affords my helpless youth. But I must leave you," added she, whilst her eyes swam in tears. "I have walked an hour, and my aunt likes to see me exact." You will believe that this short interview was not the *exact* preparation I needed for the scene I witnessed at dinner. Her aunt actually sent her from table with the soup and beef, neither of which she had tasted, because she had not done her allotted task. God, I hope, will forgive me for the thought that half choaked

me, and which would have finally choaked Miss Lucretia, had it been successful. I was so angry with Lady Maclairn, that I believe she perceived it; for nothing escapes her observation. After dinner we were by ourselves; and, in the most unqualified terms, I noticed Miss Flint's want of humanity and good manners to a girl whom she was bound to treat as a daughter. "I am astonished at your forbearance," added I; "for these instances of her unfeeling temper put me into a fever."—"You are mistaken," answered she with seriousness, "if you suppose I suffer the less for being patient. I am as sensible as you can be of the improper treatment Miss Howard has to support: but I know I am more effectually serving her by being silent, than I could be by opposing her aunt. You know not this woman so well as I do; nor the necessity which forces me to witness her harshness and severity to

this sweet and innocent girl. I must be passive, Miss Cowley. Yet there is a fault in Mary. She has been taught to dread Miss Flint. She is too much under the impressions given to her mind when with her uncle, to perceive that there is in Lucretia's temper a jealousy in regard to the affections of those about her. With less timidity, and more apparent contentment, she would remove from her aunt's mind the suspicion which interposes between her niece and every act of kindness her natural generosity would prompt. She believes Mary detests her."—"Good Heaven!" cried I, "she must so believe, for her conscience accuses her of deserving to be hated!—But, you say, Mary has been taught to dread this aunt. Are Miss Flint's *tender mercies* calculated to rectify her opinions? And would you wish to see a girl at *her age* practise an address which would contaminate the rectitude of a mind at

any age, in order to gain favour, and to sleep and eat in peace? I should see this girl trampled upon without pity, were I to see her for one moment smile and *lick* the hand which oppresses her!"—"Ah, my dear Miss Cowley," replied the agitated Lady Maclairn, "in this sentiment are contained the genuine feelings of nature, and the language of an untried spirit. May you never know the pressure of those circumstances in life which leave the principle vigorous, and fetter down the power of exerting it!"

Miss Howard entered the room. Her eyes were red with weeping. She brought Miss Flint's request that we would take our tea in her apartment. In the humour I was in, I would as soon have paid a visit to a felon in Newgate! I sent my negative, and left the room abruptly. You will perceive that your Rachel Cowley had lost sight of wisdom. Tell me not, Lucy, that I am an enthusiast;

I will maintain, to my dying day, that there is language which hypocrisy can never speak. Lady Maclairn is a *Flamall!* not one line in her face corresponded with a feeling of mine. I told my tale to Mrs. Allen.—What a contrast! The glow of indignation, the look of pity, with which she listened to my story, made me thankful that a slight cold had kept her in her room at the dining hour.

I had scarcely recovered my *sang froid* before Lady Maclairn, with a countenance as placid and gentle as the pleased infant's, entered to *chat*, and enquire about the rebel tooth which had teazed Mrs. Allen; and, with a calm and easy good humour, she asked my permission for Sir Murdock's visit. "I am going," added she, smiling, "to bring Miss Flint into good humour; and if I should be so fortunate as to succeed, Mary shall have a holiday and walk with you." I

could only bow: but in spite of nature this woman subdued me; for she checked a sigh that I could not resist, and left me, to send in my guest. Sir Murdock finding I was "at home," joined me; and, to smooth my own ruffled features, and gratify him, I went to the harp. I have however, prescribed for myself as well as my patient; the *penseroso* in music having more than once betrayed him into tears and myself into sadness, by sounds which came

——"o'er his ear like the sweet south
That breathes upon a bank of violets."

Two or three songs of Horace's are now locked up; and the baronet is contented with being roused to cheerfulness by Scotch ballads.

Let me know in your next letter how many months Rachel Cowley has been at Tarefield. Mrs. Allen's calendar says

not more than one—can this be true? Poor Horace! how tedious must be to him the account of time if he computes it as I do! How many precious hours which Providence has given us, have been, and will be still lost to the account of happiness!—A happiness, Lucy, which would not have interfered with a single duty, nor invaded on the rights of a single human being!—Good night!

Well, I will be good, and endeavour to be patient. I will eat, and drink, and sleep, and forget not only my own cares, but cease to feel and be angry at the sight of oppressed innocence. I will grow fat, and say with Miss Flint and her tribe, "What! are not the poor and friendless made for our use?" I will do any thing rather than grieve my Lucy; but you have, my dear girl, your whims and crotchets to correct, as well as I my petulancies and opinions to govern.

What has given you the notion that I am starved at Tarefield? Please to understand that Miss Flint prides herself on the goodness and abundance of her table; and although she has not yet acquired a relish for a dinner of herbs seasoned by love and peace, she has an excellent appetite for the stalled ox. Consequently, as the song says,

> "Each day has the spit and the pot,
> With plenty of pudding and pie."

Therefore be assured, that if to "pine all the day is my lot," it is not because I am hungry or ill fed. No, no: it is the sovereign will of Miss Lucretia Flint, that there should be no want of any thing at Tarefield but *contentment*; and as she can live without it, why should not others?

Yesterday morning Mrs. Allen and myself, escorted by the baronet, encountered Malcolm in our ramble before

breakfast. He was in rustic attire, and had a scythe slung on his shoulder. He joined us with a face glowing with health and exercise; and with the utmost cheerfulness accosting us, he said he had been working two hours in the meadow. "It is not remote," added he, "and if you love nature's perfumes, Miss Cowley, I advise you to lengthen your walk. You will find the poets need not the aid of fiction to heighten their description of a *hay-field*, whatever they may do in describing hay-makers. Were I poetically decorated, I would offer you my arm, but in this trim."——I interrupted him by bidding him lead the way, and be content without rivaling a birth-night beau.

We soon reached the field, in which were, with a number of people at work, the proprietor, farmer Wilson, a neat comely looking man, and Captain Percival Flint. They advanced to meet us;

but I perceived an instantaneous change in the baronet's countenance, and I thought the salutation between the captain and him more ceremonies than cordial. Sir Murdock, however, introduced him to us; and then, with a forced smile, he asked him why he had so long deserted the Hall. The captain said he was sorry he had understood the family to be too much engaged to admit intruders, as it had prevented his visit of congratulation on his return home; and that he had himself been on an excursion for some time since that period. Sir Murdock's brow cleared, he gave his hand,—"You must be more neighbourly," said he, "and help us to reconcile the retirement of this village to these ladies." He bowed, and I began to talk of Miss Howard. I finished my panegyric with an assumed complaint of her idleness, and begged he would come to the hall, were it for no other purpose than to exert his authority

and oblige her to walk out. "She used to be fond of walking," replied he pensively; "but the want of a companion of her own age, has, I fear, depressed her spirits and activity."—"Probably," answered I; "but only second me and I will engage she shall forget cross-stitch and meditation in a month." He smiled, whilst a deep sigh escaped him. I know your reverence for a black coat, Lucy, and this predilection will not, with you, be disgraced by a prudish prejudice against a red coat. With me a bare suit of regimentals, unspotted by the wearer's conduct, and unsullied by time and inattention, are credentials I must respect. The neatness of this veteran son of Mars, marked with me the gentleman; and I lost no time in my observations. He is even now too fair for a hero; but the fortune of war has indented a scar over his left eye-brow, which gives manliness, if not dignity, to his countenance; for it

certainly lessens the effects of a mild expression, and apparent want of health, by no means corresponding with a military man: a wooden leg, however, it must be allowed, does, and the captain's fame as a soldier has reached the village, where he is regarded with admiration and respect: but his manners are so placid and gentle, that I could not help fancying a cross and a rosary would have converted his portrait into the interesting and war-subdued hermit. So leaving you to finish this sketch, either as an anchorite, or a half-pay captain of marines, I shall continue to inform you of the impression which his past interview with me has left. We were such good friends before we parted that I ventured to tell him, that the sight of a military beau was a phenomenon which had not entered into my calculation of the pleasures to be found at Tarefield, and that his appearance had put my prudence and discretion

quite off their guard, insomuch, that I dared to make an assignation with him for the evening. "You cannot, as a soldier, "added I, " refuse my challenge; but I warn you I shall bring into the field a *second*, in the person of Mary Howard." He laughed, and replied with gaiety and gallantry, that he accepted my terms, although the time had been, when he should have conditioned for *others;* but that I might depend on his punctuality.

On our return home I mentioned this arrangement to my companions. Sir Murdock, delighted with his morning walk, said he would be of the evening party; but instantly recollecting the difficulty of my engagement, he asked me, by what stratagem I intended to free the poor captive Mary from her cage. I was not quite prepared with an answer to this question; and could only reply,

that I trusted to fortune and my own ingenuity for success.

The gaiety of the baronet amply indemnified Lady Maclairn for having waited for her breakfast. She was treated with the detail of our walk and with quotations from Thompson's seasons; and with the contentedness of the hour, and a good appetite, he rallied me on my advances to the captain, telling his wife of the appointed rendezvous, and of my plot to reach Captain Flint's heart by means of his niece. Would you could see Lady Maclairn in moments like these! Why have I not Ithuriel's spear? For nothing less potent can reach the genuine features of this woman's mind! This morning, for example, she was ingenuous and unconstrained, her sweet eyes contemplating with delight the cheerfulness of Sir Murdock, when in a moment I saw her countenance change, and her eyes cast downwards, from the effects of these

words: "My Harriot, you must be of our party; you must intercede for poor Mary."—"You know it is not in my power," answered she, with evident distress. Sir Murdock's gaiety sunk in an instant; but I interposed my influence, and with assumed spirits said, I would trust to no one for the deliverance of Mary but myself; and that I had already formed my plan of action. Do you not think Lady Maclairn is somewhat obliged to her guest for these timely helps? I suspect she feels her obligations of this sort sometimes too sensibly.

But to return from this digression. I need not tell you that from the first hour I entered into this house, I took care to mark with a *decided* precision, my absolute independence, in respect to Miss Flint's will and pleasure. In every compliance, in every act, I have shewn her, that I look to Sir Murdock and Lady Maclairn as the regulators of my con-

duct, and as the heads of the house. But I found it was necessary either to declare open war with Miss Lucretia on the occasion before me, or to try her ladyship's mode of *bending* to the despot. The lesson was a new one, and I felt an inclination to make an attempt in the art of flattery. So prepared, I met Miss Lucretia at dinner: fortunately she was in a pleasant humour; and giving a gulp to my pride, I praised her skill in carving, and told her the story of poor Mrs. Primrose's white satin gown, and the unlucky goose-carver's disgrace, in the best manner. I succeeded; and my next manœvre was to overlook the poor girl who silently sat beside me, patiently expecting to have her empty plate supplied. My unusual politeness was not lost, for I also talked of Jamaica. Upon this ground, I presume, she called for a glass of rum and water, "half and half," and drank to all friends there. Even this went

down my proud stomach in a glass of wine, and I became so *agreeable* that she invited me and the circle to drink tea in her apartment. Our cheerful acceptance of her invitation was followed by a recollection of her dress, which was not *en régle*, and she left us to prepare the silver tea-board, and to make her toilet. I was delighted to find Sir Murdock had enjoyed this scene: he told his wife I was a plotter, and bade her beware of my Circean-arts. She smiled, and said I needed no auxiliaries, otherwise she would readily join my standard, seeing it was my design to lead tyranny captive.

On entering Miss Flint's drawing-room, I perceived that Mary had been permitted to put on her Sunday muslin gown; and to her native charms and holiday suit, her youthful fancy had given the finish by placing some moss-roses in her bosom. She was seated in the remotest of the bow windows, with a huge

mass of canvass before her, and was plying her needle with all dispatch to get up the lost time. The endless roll of carpeting was now displayed. Miss Cowley could not but praise the design; and she heard that *three* years would finish the furniture of the room in cross-stitch, without *one comment* that could offend. Can you wonder that Mary was allowed to fetch her bonnet, and to join the walking party after tea? Will you not rather wonder at my success in this new trial of my talents? But between ourselves, I begin to suspect that the art of wheedling, is one of our natural prerogatives. You cannot imagine with what dexterity I employed my untried weapons! It was well they served me; for during the demurs and difficulties Miss Flint opposed to my intreaties, I felt my forbearance was like Acre's courage, not indeed oozing out at my fingers' ends, but with every breath I drew; and

had she not consented when she did, I should have lost my hard-earned laurels. You will not, however, fail in congratulating me on my triumph over myself. But mark me, Lucy, I mean not to twist and turn at the orders of that prudence which is so often practised for wisdom. It is necessary for my purpose that Miss Howard's friends should know more of me before I can effectually oppose Miss Flint's will; but when they do understand that Rachel Cowley can no more live under the same roof with an oppressed orphan, than Miss Lucretia shelter one, without feeding her spleen, and qualifying her malice for the bread she bestows, farewell wheedling and coaxing! My road will be plain, and if perchance I encounter any of Miss Lucretia's frowns in my way, I shall laugh at them.

This poor girl hangs on my spirits. I will reserve for my next letter the ac-

count of our evening walk. You will lose nothing by my going to bed; for I am weary, and somewhat of your petulant

RACHEL COWLEY.

LETTER VIII.

Miss Cowley to Miss Hardcastle.

WE found the party in the hay-field augmented by all farmer Wilson's family, namely, his wife, with a Mrs. and Miss Heartley, their boarders and lodgers, to whom Malcolm introduced us with an eagerness of good-will and pleasure which was flattering to me. The tender greetings between those ladies and Mary, evidently proved that I had communicated more of joy and gladness than I had foreseen, by my interference; and as this was the case, I took my share of the general satisfaction, which appeared like the sky, *cloudless*. Mrs. Wlison soon re-

stored us to order, by leading us to seats under a hay-cock, and began to distribute amongst us a syllabub milked from the cow, with some fruit and cakes. Sir Murdock, who had appeared placid, though silent, suddenly turning to his son, desired him to change seats with him. This request was indulged with alacrity, and he placed his father next Mrs. Heartley. "How often of late," said the poor baronet, suveying her with a melancholy air, "have I wished to have the opportunity of telling you, that Sir Murdock Maclairn esteems and reverences you for your unremitting kindnesses and consideration for his Malcolm. Yet now I am near you, language fails me; I am oppressed by my feelings. Recollections too painful for me meet this hour of peace and restored happiness." He took her hand and burst into tears. Mrs. Heartley, with much emotion and confusion, said something of her hopes of

being still favoured with his good opinion, and of her satisfaction at seeing her worthy neighbour. He caught the last word of her incoherent speech. "Yes," replied he, "I hope we shall be *neighbours* as well as *friends!* My sufferings are terminated. Witness this hour of peace! Witness the mercy which has sent me an angel of consolation!"—He gazed wildly on my face; and sinking his head between his knees and hands, he murmured out "Matilda! sainted, blessed Matilda!" I was alarmed.—"It will be momentary," said the agitated Malcolm, in a low voice, "be not disturbed!" He was not mistaken, for in a few minutes Sir Murdock's serenity was restored; and he asked Miss Heartley, in a manner which marked that he had no consciousness of his late disorder, some questions relative to her brother who was in the East-Indies. She replied; and the baronet, with renewed

cheerfulness and an expressive smile, said, "And what excuse will you make to 'this dear brother,' when he knows you have monopolized a heart which he ought to share?" A deep blush was the only answer to this question, which awakened my curiosity. I was however called from further observation by being asked for a song; but willing to make the conversation more general, I alledged that I was too angry to sing; and, with assumed resentment, I reproached the captain's want of discretion as well as courage in bringing into the field so many witnesses of my weakness, and so many guards against his own. "You wrong your gallant, by your suspicious, Miss Cowley," answered Mrs. Heartley, with ease and spirit. But what will he answer to my reproaches? He has been my slave these twenty years and more, and yet had the audacity to conceal this assignation from me. I am indebted to

my friend Mr. Malcolm for the intelligence of my danger; and I now see it," added she, laughing; "yet, woman to the last, I will maintain my rights to him against youth and beauty."—A certain mode of expression, with the correct gaiety and ease of her manners, soon attached me to this lady's side; and in our walk home she apparently slackened her pace, the more unnoticedly to converse with me.—"You will think me very deficient in the rules of good breeding," said she, when entering the road to the hall, "on finding that I neglect to pay you my respects at Sir Murdock's house; but I do not visit the family. My avowed affection and long intimacy with Mrs. Howard, and my still longer acquaintance with Captain Flint, have laid me under indelible disgrace with Miss Flint. Lady Maclairn's situation, and the circumstances of distress under which she has lived, have

precluded all approaches to her of a personal kind. You will therefore, I trust, accept of this apology for my not waiting on you and your friend. Yet," continued she, smiling, "you must not imagine me a woman too obscure for Miss Flint's notice. In her zeal for her neighbours' good behaviour, she has thought proper to single me out as an object to be feared and shunned by all modest women. There is, however, a conduct, Miss Cowley, that will refute malice and silence slander, without calling out either resentment or reproach. Mine is such as has done more than was needful for my justification, for it has disappointed an angry woman in her purpose; and my neighbours have always judged me according to that rule of Christian charity, 'which thinketh no evil.' They have also gone farther than this precept will justify, for I believe they think I must be *good*, because Miss Flint hates

me. Malcolm's attachment to me and my children has also its share in keeping alive Miss Flint's animosity. From a child this young man has been regarded, by myself and the family at large with whom I reside, as a cherished and favoured guest. This circumstance has, I much fear, been unfavourable to Miss Howard; it has certainly abridged her in her freedom. She is not permitted to visit her uncle, because he lives under the same roof with me; and she dares not speak to either Alice or myself, when accident throws her in our path, if she has a servant with her. My poor girl murmurs at this refinement in cruelty, and strenuously pleads that I ought to inform Captain Flint of this harsh prohibition; but I forbear, in the hopes that time will relax Miss Lucretia's heart; and in the interim Mr. Maclairn favours the girls in writing. Miss Howard's account of Miss Cowley produced the wish to see

her," added she smiling. "This we have effected; and I have only now to add, that if in your seclusion from the world you should feel disposed to relieve the dull monotony of your hours by a walk to us, we shall be gratified.—I was formerly acquainted with your friend Counsellor Steadman. When you write to to him, ask him whether he has forgotten Henry Heartley, and whether he thinks his widow a proper associate for you." I expressed my confidence in her worth. Shesmiled, and thanked me. "But, added she, "it is necessary you should know the woman who, at my age and with my appearance, cautions you to keep, as a *secret*, from Miss Flint, even the harmless recreation of this evening. Our meeting Mary would not be allowed to be accidental on her part, and I doubt she is severely treated by her aunt. She conceals from her friend Alice every instance of this kind, but

Malcolm is not so reserved with us, and we are miserable on her account. The captain hopes to soften his sister's heart to a sense of justice at least, and has given up the comfort and prop of his life to the fallacious expectation that Miss Flint will love and provide for the future support of this poor orphan. I did not in the first instance oppose his plan of conciliation. His sister offered to take her; and he yielded her up to her promises of being her friend and protector; but if he knew Miss Howard's situation she would not remain a hour at Tarefield-hall. Poor Mary understands this perfectly; and with an heroism which does her credit, suffers without complaint, rather than return to be a burden on her uncle. I need not recommend to your favour," continued she, "this innocent and helpless girl. We are told that you pity her, but be cautious in what you say to her uncle. His mind

has been broken down by sorrow and the injuries of fortune, his feelings are become irritable, and his spirit will not brook further insult. Perhaps this gentle creature may find her aunt has a heart. Time must be allowed her to work a change in so obdurate a mind; it is her wish to make the trial complete; but a year and more has been lost already in the attempt, and I have my doubts of her ever being easy or happy where she is."—"Mrs. Allen and myself," observed I, "were much struck by the mode in which this young and amiable creature was treated, even before we had been a day at Tarefield; but Miss Flint soon explained to me her system, and left me nothing for wonder, though sufficient for abhorrence. But, my dear Mrs. Heartley, do me the favour, if it be possible, to explain to me Lady Maclairn's conduct. I wish to esteem her. Wherefore is it, that with a temper so mild and gentle,

I see her passively yielding up her dignity in her own house, and witnessing in silence her sister's treatment of an unoffending girl, who has a just claim even upon *her ladyship for* protection."—"Poor Lady Maclaine," replied she, "is inured to suffering. She knows she can effect nothing, but by an abject submission to Miss Flint. Many causes have contributed to break down her spirits; but none have lessened her principles of virtue: she is an estimable woman, and much to be pitied."—We were interrupted by Mary's running towards us to take leave of Mrs. Heartley. She threw her arms around her neck, and, fondly kissing her, said, "Now you will believe that I am comfortable! One day in a month like this would be happiness! You see I have now a dear, kind friend!"—Our general adieux followed; but again Malcolm deserted us for the plea of business at Wilson's.

Whether it was owing to my dose of flattery, or to the rum bottle, I will not decide; but certain it is, that Miss Lucretia received us with good-humour. She was more than commonly loquacious; and I, with the patience of a Lady Maclairn, listened to the history of her sprained knee, which had spoiled her for a walker. This disastrous subject gave place to her inviting me to take an airing with her the following morning, when she engaged to shew me a very "pretty country." But this was nothing, for I was even proof against a long story in which her dear brother Philip was the hero, and I was led to approve of his conduct by a direct interrogation. "Was not his behaviour noble?"—I forgot the tale, but I recollect he saved a young woman's being thrown from her horse. I had, however, my measures to keep, and we retired for the night in perfect good-humour. What a simpleton I have been

in not at first beginning to manage this woman by my address! She would fetch and carry like a spaniel were she but flattered. But more of this hereafter. You must know more of Mrs. Heartley and her fair daughter Alice. Mrs. Heartley is more indebted to an air of fashion and dignity, for the attractions of her person, than either to her features or shape. Her face would be called homely were it not lighted up by her dark and expressive eyes; and although I believe she is defective in her shape, she moves with grace, and is what you would distinguish by the title of an "elegant woman." Her daughter would at once be thought by the admirers of half-starved, pale-faced beauties, as too nearly approaching to the dairy maid; for contentment and health have given Alice an *embon point* beyond the prescribed rules of fashion. She is a clear brunette, and her damask cheek has a *rouge* which

thousands vainly strive to imitate. A pair of large hazel eyes give life and spirit to her round and dimpled face; and when she smiles (and Alice has yet to learn that smiles and laughter are vulgar) she is a perfect Hebe; and Mrs. Allen wished Bunbury had seen her, as he would not have omitted to give this laughter-loving nymph in his charming group of rural beauties. She tells me that I have not been just to Alice; perhaps I have not; and that I should have been more lavish of my praise of this handsome girl, had she not been by the side of Miss Howard. But again I pronounce this young creature to be nature's master-piece! I had not before seen her animated by pleasure or exercise, nor could I have believed her delicate features capable of expressing the vivacity she discovered. She seemed to tread in air, and, whilst with winning smiles and captivating grace, she drew around her the people

who were at work, the greater part of whom she called by their names, I could not but apply to this innocent enchantress the lines given to the charms of the mischief-making Armida.

"In wavy ringlets falls her beautious hair,
That catch new graces from the sportive air:
Declin'd on earth, her modest look denies
To shew the starry lustre of her eyes:
O'er her fair face a rosy bloom is spread,
And stains her ivory neck with lovely red:
Soft breathing sweets her opening lips disclose,
The native odours of the budding rose."

I could not forbear uttering this rhapsody to the captain as he stood near me, whilst Mary was receiving the honest admiration of her humble friends. He smiled, but a sigh succeeded. "She is fair and lovely," said he with emotion, "and as good as she is fair, and as innocent as she is lovely;—but so was her mother, Miss Cowley; yet she found this

world a hard pilgrimage!" He turned away from me, and joined his niece. I will now bid you farewell.—Mrs. Allen joins in my blessings for your repose. —Yours,

RACHEL COWLEY.

LETTER IX.

From the same to the same.

YOUR letter of Thursday, my dear Lucy, is in my hands twenty-four hours sooner than I expected it; but good news cannot travel too fast, and I sit down as blithe as a bird to thank you for the contents of an epistle which has renewed my spirits, and which will render me the "best creature in the world with Miss Lucretia;" for whose summons I am prepared in order to take an airing, and which allows me only time at present to tell you, that I am happy to find you do not any longer think your compliance

with your brother's request, is indispensible on the ground of duty. Why should he not be indulged with the sight of my gossiping letters from hence? Erase, expunge what you please; but gratify him with the details which you find amuse yourself. Let him see that his sister contrives to make in this dull portion of her life, those exertions which prevent her mind from stagnating. Do not think you err by deviating from the *letter* of your father's harsh law, whilst you so carefully adhere to the *spirit of it.* I would no more tempt my Lucy to sin, than I would sin myself. Horace knows that I am not a spiritless, whining, love-sick girl; but he well knows what I have to sustain in my separation from you, and in my removal from Heathcot. Have no fears, I beseech you, as to the final event of such an attachment as the one which binds me to Horace Hardcastle. When he ceases to be worthy of my

esteem and affection, I shall despise him; and when I forget myself, he will despise me. Neither your father's scruples, nor the maxims of the world will lessen the ties which unite our hearts; of this be assured.——I am summoned, the coach drives up.

LETTER IX.

In continuation.

It was not to the fault of the weather, my dear Lucy, that Miss Flint could attribute her return home with a head-ach; nor do I attribute my fatigue to the morning airing; but I begin to find out that I am not yet quite proof against provocations: read, and judge. The mistress of the vehicle with much cheerfulness received me into it, and observed most graciously, that it was time for Miss

Cowley "to see a little about her." In consequence of this intention she gave the servant his directions, and we proceeded not more than a mile, before "Miss Cowley" discovered that Tarefield-hall had not been more unfortunate in the lack of taste in its first projector, than it has been since in its lack of cheerfulness and contentment; for gradually descending from the heath, we came in view of the village, and a country, by no means unpictures que. My attention to the valley in sight, through which meanders a branch of the river War, was interrupted by our approach towards a large house, which still wore the relics of Gothic architecture, and past magnificence. Upon enquiry, I learned that it was still called the "Abbey," and was the residence of "*one Wilson, a farmer.*"—"What a striking monument it offers," observed I, surveying the venerable mansion, "of the lapse of

that is good news, Martha," observed Miss Flint, "and I hope your mistress is in spirits." "Poor lady!" answered the girl in a tone of pity, "she has never held up her head since her poor son Mr. Banks left us; she is quite broken down, Madam! I wish you would have the goodness to see her. The kitchen is quite in order," added she, glancing her eyes on the untrod path to the house. "Poor soul!" said Miss Flint, "I could not comfort her, Martha, and I am pressed for time. Give my love to her. Drive on, William." Thus concluded the *friendly* call. "You have had a good escape," observed she, settling her large person more at ease. "We should have been detained an hour with Mrs. Snughead's lamentations about her son. I pity her husband most sincerely, for he has for twelve years and more had the plague of a wife, who is hourly dying, if you credit her, and whose death he dreads; for her

jointure of five hundred pounds per annum, pays for her board, though in my opinion, not for his life of mortification and continual fear. When I see such marriages as these," continued she with an air of self-complacency, "I bless my good fortune in having escaped matrimony; not that I think there are none happy but those who are unshackled, for I am persuaded there are many happy matches; and that a young woman cannot do more prudently, than to secure to herself an honourable protection, and a worthy man. When I was young, I was too useful to my poor father to think of changing my condition. I was my father's only comfort during a period of his life rendered miserable by the conduct and ingratitude of his children; particularly his favourite daughter, Mrs. Howard, whom he brought up with too much fondness and indulgence. His second marriage was an absurdity; and

he soon found that it added little to his domestic enjoyments. It did not require the spirit of witchcraft, for me to foresee what did result from so unequal an union as my father's with this young bride; but I could not desert my post even then with satisfaction to myself. The mother-in-law was a mere child in the knowledge proper for the mistress of a family; and I soon discovered, that my father had only added to my cares by placing at his table an indolent woman, who only married him in order to live at her ease. However, I will be just to Lady Maclairn; as my father's wife, she conducted herself with discretion and modesty, and I have in return been her constant friend.

Her marriage with Sir Murdock was a foolish business! Mr. Flamall strongly opposed it; but Harriot was always romantic! He predicted *then*, that the baronet would be crazy; and well he

might, for he had symptoms of insanity which no one could overlook. But a title, though without a groat, flattered Mrs. Flint's vanity, and I had only to reconcile matters, and to think of preventing the evils of this connection as it related to my dear Philip's security. You may judge, Miss Cowley," continued she with augmenting seriousness," of my affection for a brother, whom, from the hour of his birth, I considered as consigned in a peculiar manner to my guardianship and care. His mother's second marriage enforced these duties on my heart; to shelter him, I was determined to offer my house to Lady Maclairn as a residence at once honourable and prudent for her. Thus has it happened, that I have had for years a lunatic under my roof. Besides this, I boarded the whole family at so moderate a sum, that with a better regulated economy, Lady Maclairn might have saved something for

Malcolm's exigencies, for Philip was entirely my charge; but I cannot imagine how she manages her purse, it is never beforehand, and I doubt, Malcolm will take care to prevent all accumulations. Idleness at his age is a melancholy prospect! I wish Harriot may not live to repent of her confidence in this young man. But now I am on the subject of my family, I will add a few words in explanation of my conduct, as it relates to another object of my care. Were you, Miss Cowley, acquainted with all the insults and injuries I have sustained from Mary Howard's parents, you would only wonder to find her under my roof. But when I received her, to relieve my brother Percival from a burden he could ill sustain, I meant not to train her up to any expectations but such as resulted from her mother's imprudence. She it was who entailed poverty on her child; and I shall fulfil my duty, in teaching

her to be useful and industrious; lessons she never would have learned but for me. I know she has complained to you of my severity, as she and her friends call my vigilance"——"Never, Madam," said I, interrupting her, "your plan of conduct needed no explanation with me; and Miss Howard neither directly nor indirectly has accused you of doing wrong in my presence."—"Well," answered she, with great warmth, "on this point I am perfectly at my ease, provided she tells you at the same time, that her parents brought my dear father with sorrow to his grave, and that my peace and happiness were destroyed by their perfidy." She spoke, and looked so like a fury, my dear Lucy, that I was absolutely silenced by dismay. "But let us change this topic," continued she, softening her voice, "for one more agreeable to you, and less painful to myself. I think I need not say to Miss Cowley,

that I acceded with joy to my dear brother's prospects of an alliance with you. I must however observe that your worthy father, not only evinced his affection for you in his choice of Philip, but the prudence of a man solicitous for the prosperity of a rising family. On the score of merit and conduct, Philip needs not fear any competitor for your favour. His fortune will be ample and solid, for I consider myself as only his steward. Mr. Flamall's proposal of your residing at the hall, was a matter I heartily concurred in; and in order to give Lady Maclairn more consequence in a family you have honoured by your presence, and to which you will belong, I resigned my authority in it, and became, like yourself, a boarder; paying at the rate of six hundred pounds per annum for the accommodations of myself and servants." —I was going to speak, in order to spare her any further display of her consum-

mate prudence, but she proceeded.—"I have said nothing of the person of your '*intended*," said she, with a most gracious smile. "This is his picture drawn when he was about eighteen." She presented me a miniature of the young man, which to say the truth was strikingly handsome. "Nature has been liberal to your favourite," observed I, examining the portrait. "He is much improved in his person," said she with eagerness, "since that age. There is not in England a finer made man! I am certain you will allow this when you see him."—"I hope to be disposed to render justice to Mr. Flint's merit in every point," answered I, "for this consideration he has a right which he may claim; but, my dear Madam, I conceived, that you, as well as the rest of Mr. Flint's family, understood that I had declined the conditions of my father's will: I was explicit with Sir Murdock,

Mr. Flamall, and consequently your nephew, know by this time, that Rachel Cowley is not to be transferred like her father's negroes from one master to another. I have no resentment against Mr. Flint. His pretensions to me are too ridiculous for a serious examination; and if he have a just title to the character he bears, he will scorn, as I do, an interference so offensive to his honour, and so humiliating to his self-love. I could say more on this subject," added I with spirit, "but it is unnecessary; and I request I may be spared from renewing it. Lady Maclairn has avoided it; and you, Madam, when you know more of me, will give me credit for a frankness in my manner of treating it, which is as *decisive* as *it is firm.* Mr. Flamall is my *scorn,* and I wish by hearing nothing more of *his nephew,* to respect Mr. Philip Flint as your brother, and Lady Maclairn's son. When I marry, it will not

be a husband of Mr. Flamall's appointing." The rising and deepening tints of Miss Lucretia's fiery cheek, prepared me for her speech. "I would advise you, Miss Cowley, as a friend," said she, "to be cautious of provoking a man of Mr. Flamall's character, by using a language of this kind to him, whatever may be your intention in regard to the duty you owe to your deceased father's will."—"My father's will," exclaimed I, "will not be violated by my rejection of Mr. Flamall's authority, which, in every instance, I despise!"—"It is because you do not know him, I am very certain," answered she with suppressed rage. "You are mistaken, Madam," replied I with firmness, "I *do* know Mr. Flamall. It is himself, who from the false estimate he has made of his talents, forgets it was necessary for him *to know* his benefactor's daughter, before he hazarded a scheme which will end in his defeated

ambition. My residence at Tarefield is the prelude only of my designs, to shew this man, that he can do no more than be subservient to *a Cowley:* this I will make him, and it may be he will acknowledge this. *I only* understood the secret of teaching him to know his place and duty; my father assuredly did not."—"You astonish me," said she, "by your violence and prejudice against Mr. Flamall; you even insinuate suspicions against his honour."—"*Honour!*" repeated I with a look which seemed to silence his defender; "the honour of Mr. Flamall cannot suffer." The remainder of our road was passed without a single word being exchanged. She retired to her own room, on arriving at the hall. At dinner, Mary said her aunt had gotten a head-ach and could eat nothing. I suspect she drank the more, for before supper the dear girl joined us, saying her

aunt was in bed and asleep, having been much fatigued, and out of spirits.

The evening was too inviting not to tempt us out. Not a breeze ruffled its serenity; the moon shed her silver radiance o'er the tranquil scene. Mary, light of heart, bounded before us like a sylph. Sir Murdock spouted Ossian with enthusiastic delight. Your Rachel's spirits had been disturbed, and to compose themselves they made an excursion—no matter where,—since they found repose. Lady Maclairn and Mrs. Allen, wisely judging that star-gazing and quoting might not suit them so well as walking, proceeded to meet the truant Malcolm, in which purpose they succeeded; and we walked till a late hour. Amongst the various conjectures which my ingenuity has suggested in my endeavours to fathom the real character of Lady Maclairn, I began to suspect that she had some intention to circumvent her bro-

ther in his plans of securing my father's property for *his* favourite. She has hitherto most diligently adhered to the conditions I exacted, rarely mentioning even the name of her son Philip, whereas she frequently descants with fondness and eloquence on the merit and conduct of her "dear Malcolm," "her prop," "her boast." I had even infused into Mrs. Allen's mind something of my own suspicions, when on our return to the house after meeting with the young man, chance gave to me a secret which has quite overset this opinion of Lady Maclairn's policy. Something which escaped Mary, whose arm I had taken, in the gaiety of her heart, produced from me the question, "Is then Mr. Maclairn a lover?"—"Yes," replied she, "he has courted Miss Heartley a long time." "Do Sir Murdock and his mother approve of his attachment?" "Oh dear, yes!" answered she, with innocent vivacity,

"How should they do otherwise? She is one of the most amiable girls in the world, as well as the most virtuous and prudent of her sex. Besides, Malcolm and Alice have loved each other from their childhood, and they will never cease to love." I was answered and satisfied. So you see, Lucy, these freaks of fancy happen *elsewhere* as well as at *Heathcot.* I think in another century parents may discover the force of sympathy, and will think of some remedy for the mischief it may do whilst their children are in the cradle. It is a wretched business, when poor unfortunate beings, whose wealth is unequal, take it into their heads to yield to the attraction of sympathy. It is still worse, when the scale of fortune is empty on both sides. Might not the now useless sash worn by children round their waists, be usefully worn over their eyes *till* they are properly *married?* I speak only of those neglected children, who,

left to nature's lessons, are so apt to receive impressions from beings as devoid of instruction as themselves; for I am aware, that young people *properly* educated for the world they are to live in, want no mufflers. They may be trusted with the use of their eyes; or should it happen that a beam of light dazzles them for a moment, a coach-and-six, a diamond necklace, or a sounding name, will restore them to the true point of vision. But I must be serious. What pains and penalties, my Lucy, does the folly of man give to the pilgrimage of this life! Not satisfied with the allotted portion of trial deemed by Providence for our *benefit*, or to travel in a road prepared by infinite goodness for our feeble powers, we seem to be diligent in obstructing it when smooth and level, with thorns and briars of our own seeking. Your good father, my Lucy, with all his wisdom, dares not make his chil-

dren happy,—and, why not? Because Miss Cowley ought to marry a man as rich as herself. Where does Mr. Hardcastle find this law? In a world he despises.—"Is it not late, my dear child," asks the sympathizing, Mrs. Allen, looking compassionately on my tell-tale eyes. It is time to forget the world at least.

Yours, ever,

RACHEL COWLEY.

LETTER X.

From the same to the same.

Unbending dignity, Lucy, has been a match for sullenness. I have conquered; and Miss Flint has broken silence, and held out the olive branch. But hold, it was not that unbending dignity you may suspect which produced peace, it was in sober truth my *folly* which did the business; for as she could not always look

grave when others laughed, she forgot her anger and laughed with the rest. As I have measures to keep, I was in nowise ungracious in my turn, and all discord was buried by my reading to the collected circle, the comedy you sent me. Before we parted, Miss Flint mentioned her intention of going to church the next morning, and I readily engaged to accompany her. You must have been surprised, that I have not mentioned to you our having been in a church since I have been here, but the absence of the rector had slackened Miss Flint's zeal, and the baronet and his lady preferred their own prayers to Mr. Snughead's. Mrs. Allen likes their form of devotion, and having a head-ach, has remained quiet to profit from Sir Murdock's sermon. A little of the still fermenting leaven, as I suspect, induced Miss Flint to disappoint my expectations of a ride with her niece; on my enquiring for her, she said with a haughty

air, that Mary preferred walking with Warner, her woman. We soon reached the church, and I followed my stately conductress to a pew in the church, in which was another equally distinguished by its size and decorations of lining and cushions. We had scarcely seated ourselves, for Miss Flint performs this business with peculiar caution and regard to her dress, before the Abbey family entered, escorted by Malcolm; and they took the adjoining pew. I instantly rose, and paying my compliments, asked Miss Heartley for the captain. She told me he was with Miss Howard, and following them. I again took my seat. "Why! where, in the name of wonder!" whispered Miss Flint, "did *those women* become known to you?" My answer was prevented by a harsh and strong voice, which rapidly began the service. The captain's entrance with his niece again discomposed Miss Flint's features, and the confessional

prayer was lost to her whilst she was chiding Mary for her delay. She meekly said, Mrs. Warner could not walk fast, and retiring to a remote corner of the pew, composed herself with seriousness to the duty before her. A sermon on the deceitfulness of riches, begun and finished in less than ten minutes, concluded Mr. Snughead's task. I again acknowledged the *women* in the next pew for my acquaintance, with a frankness and cordiality, which still more surprised Miss Flint. "I find my brother the captain," observed she fixing her eyes on him, "needs not any introduction to you, Miss Cowley; otherwise"——"Oh dear, no!" answered I, "Sir Murdock has anticipated you in your obliging intention. I have had the pleasure of meeting Mr. Flint in my walk." Thus saying, I joined Mr. Heartley, and left Miss Flint to the care and compliments of the rector at the church-yard gate. She with much dignity mounted

into her coach; I followed. The captain was coldly asked whether he and Mary walked; an affirmation was given: then turning to the obsequious divine, she invited him to take an airing, and to dine also, at the hall. Some excuse was pleaded, which I did not hear. "Phoo!" replied she, "there is no end of such whims. You will make an arrant slave of yourself."—"Well, I submit," answered he, leering at me, "I cannot be in better hands than yours." "We will take a circuit home," observed Miss Lucretia; with much complacency, "Miss Cowley is yet a stranger to the country, and you will contribute to recommend it." He bowed. Now, Lucy, knowing, as I do, your predilection for the cloth, I mean to be on my guard how I lessen your partiality for the black coat you so peculiarly favour: yet, truth is truth, and though I mean not to reproach you for your want of taste, I must tell you there is no comparison to be

drawn between Mr. Sedley and the reverend Mr. Snughead; to besure, our curate has some qualifications, with which in the opinion of the simple souls at Heathcot, he might rise to an archbishopric without disgrace to the pastoral crook; but in some particulars, he is a mere cypher compared to the rector of Tarefield parish. "Proofs, proofs," methinks I hear you call for. Well, be not angry, you shall have them, I advance nothing without proofs, nor any thing in malice. I honestly allow that Sedley is handsome: but his beauty is of that kind which will never make his fortune; for people in general do not much care to admire graces of any kind which they can neither rival, nor like to copy. Now, I have a notion that Mr. Snughead was, in the days of his youth, which by the way is on its wane, universally allowed to be irresistible, and that he answered exactly to what some ladies denominate "a sweet

pretty man, a neat dapper fellow, a teazing mortal." His features are still small and regular, and his complexion, naturally fair, is thought less delicate than in the days of his youth, still good; his teeth are white and even, and have suffered nothing from neglect. But either from a scurvy trick of nature, or from his neglect of fasting (I say nothing of praying), he is become so corpulent, that were one to encounter him on all fours, instead of the two limbs destined to support him, one would take him for a tortoise; you well know that I am no enemy to *en bon point;* whenever I see it with a cheerful countenance, I regard it as indicative of a contented mind: but unhappily, Mr. Snughead's opinions are diametrically the reverse of mine. He lives in open and perpetual war with this incroacher on the sympathy and elegance of his person; and by the cruelties he hourly inflicts on himself, suffers a martyrdom, from which

even the mortified Pascal would have shrunk; for I think it may be presumed, that by not eating his soup Pascal's penetential girdle was bearable; but poor Mr. Snughead cannot be at his ease either full or fasting. He imitates in barbarity the fell Procrastes, for his cloaths are made by a measure that has never been enlarged since the day of his gentility, and his unfortunate person, like the victim to the iron couch, is doomed to suffer under ligatures as painful as the rack. He seems momentarily in danger of suffocation, and I could not, without pity, hear him so often complain of the "melting weather," nor view unmoved his hand instinctively raised to his cravat in order to relieve his respiration. But Mr. Snughead's stoical firmness consoled me, and I next examined his dress. But what pen, my Lucy, can do justice to the elaborate neatness of this canonical beau! Who can describe the glossy black robes, the

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to Miss Flint asked the name of it. She mentioned it, and observed to Mr. Snughead, that *Greenwood's* plantations were flourishing. This person was, I discovered, the clergyman of the parish in view, and not in the number of Miss Lucretia's *elect*; but as Mr. Snughead had not succeeded in showing me his wit; he returned to the charge. "You will soon be pleased with your situation, I hope," said he, taking my hand, "and we shall hear you acknowledge the happiness you will meet here, without travelling further; a road which so many young ladies take, to find the temple of Hymen." I withdrew my hand, and answered him with one of my petrifying looks, as you have named my honest contempt of *puppyism.*" "When do you expect your brother?" continued he unmindful of my frowns. It was not determined, was the concise reply, and a silence ensued. Again the civil Mr. Snughead began. "I hear wonders of Sir

Murdock's health and amendment," said he, addressing Miss Flint; "they tell me his journey to London has quite renovated him. "It has produced exactly the consequences I predicted," replied she, with a toss of her head. "He is now as much too *high* in his spirits as he has been depressed; *now* he is always in motion and busy, and as a proof of his amendment, he has in his walks with Miss Cowley met the *Heartleys*, and as I supppose, introduced them to her, as neighbours of mine and Lady Maclairn's."—"Always in the wrong, poor man!" said he: "perhaps he told you, Miss Cowley, that they were duchesses incognito, for he knows them not himself. However, my dear *Madam*," continued he with a more respectful manner, "I think you should be on your guard, and never walk with Sir Murdock without another companion. There is no dependence to be placed on a man whose mind is so unsettled as the poor baronet's."

"When I perceive Sir Murdock acts either like a madman or a fool," answered I, "it will be time enough to avoid him; hitherto, I have seen no indications of an unsettled mind." "Perhaps not, *young lady*," answered he with tartness, "neither your age nor experience, I presume, have given you the opportunity of understanding, that there is very frequently a wonderful shrewdness and cunning in madness."—"I have observed no inconsistency in Sir Murdock's mind," answered I, with seriousness, "nor has he discovered to me any of that cunning you speak of, which I conclude may, and must be detected, if the person's mind be disordered. However," continued I, assuming a careless air, "if in any instance there can be found so much of *method* in madness, as to evade all examination, it entirely confirms the received opinion, that madness and wit are closely allied. Folly under this supposition

appears to me to be worse than lunacy, for that is incurable."

I am rather disposed to think that something in my too honest face proclaimed what I thought; I felt it glow, and I was out of humour: Mr. Snughead of course had the advantage of me, for with much officiousness he endeavoured to be *agreeable*. *I was the rebel Rachel Cowley*,—I could not help it, Lucy. On reaching the hall, I followed Mr. Snughead's steps, on whose arm Miss Flint leaned; and I overheard the puppy say, "Proud enough in conscience!" "Inconceivably so," was the reply. Yes, Lucy, I am proud, I disdain the civility that can simper at the conceits of a Mr. Snughead, and despise the impudence of any clerical man, who forgetting himself, and the respect that is due to his profession, fancies his *dress* is to enforce respect from others. What right has a reptile of this class to the tribute which all pay to a Sedley?

[illegible] never out of [illegible] is my opinion [illegible] harm than good." The [illegible] with which Mr. Snugheads delivered this opinion [illegible] the part of the [illegible] "She will soon be better," observed she, "I have no doubt of it, now she is rid of her constant plague. You will see her spirits will mend in a short time. But what have you done with young graceless?" "I saw him, embarked for the West Indies," replied Mr. Snugheads; "he was highly delighted with his uniform, and having gained his point, nothing would do but the army for Banks, and that predilection was, I fear, strengthened by his mother's opposition to it."—"He has been unfortunate in his destination," observed the captain, "and [illegible] have a bad climate to encounter; [illegible] late been fatal [illegible] thousands." [illegible] take his ch[illegible]

and trust to Providence!" [illegible] Mr. Snughead, with great [illegible] dence and [illegible] preserve him, [illegible] der this, and be [illegible] Miss Lucretia [illegible] that case, [illegible] associate with [illegible] However, I [illegible] for nothing [illegible] young man [illegible] string! And after all [illegible] tender-hearted [illegible] die more than once [illegible] think of what may happen [illegible] to Mr. Banks."—[illegible]

which is *merely* nervous. She is never out of the apothecary's hands, and it is my opinion, medicine does her more harm than good." The unfeigned sorrow with which Mr. Snughead delivered this opinion, induced Miss Flint to take the part of the comforter. "She will soon be better," observed she, "I have no doubt of it, now she is rid of her constant plague. You will see her spirits will mend in a sort time. But what have you done with young graceless?" "I saw him embarked for the West Indies," replied Mr. Snughead; "he was highly delighted with his uniform, and having gained his point, nothing would do but the army for Banks, and that predilection was, I fear, strengthened by his mother's opposition to it."—"He has been unfortunate in his destination," observed the captain, "and will have a bad climate to encounter; it has of late been fatal to thousands."—"He must take his chance

and trust to Providence," replied Mr. Snughead, with great gravity; "prudence and sobriety at his age, may preserve him, and I hope he will consider this, and be wise."—"Wise!" echoed Miss Lucretia, "he must act otherwise, in that case, than he has hitherto done, and associate with those wiser than himself. However, I commend him for his spirit; for nothing is so ridiculous as to see a young man tied to his mother's apron-string! And after all," continued the tender-hearted spinster, "none of us can die more than once; therefore it is a folly to think of what may happen or not happen to Mr. Banks."—Malcolm, who had during this conversation been biting a cork, with eyes flashing resentment, now burst into a sarcastic laugh. Lady Maclairn instantly rose, and observed, that the heat of the room incommoded her. A look of supplication directed to her son did not escape me. Every one agreed

that the garden was preferable, and we left the table. I retired to my room. From the window I soon after saw the party sauntering in the avenue, but as Miss Flint was not with them, I supposed she had also chosen her apartment for a *tête-à-tête* with Mr. Snughead. I therefore hastened down stairs to join my friends, when to my surprise and vexation, I found the *tête-à-tête* party quietly enjoying themselves on the garden-seat close to the door I had to pass. I could not escape them without rudeness. "You have done wisely," observed I languidly, "in being stationary."—"I think we have," answered Miss Flint, inviting me to occupy the vacant place by her side, "and I advise you to follow our example."—I urged that I was going to the avenue.—"You look fatigued," observed she with kindness, still pressing me to sit down, "and your friends will return soon, for I am certain we shall have

thunder."—Not disposed for any exertions, I took the seat, and with truth acknowledged that I had the head-ach. My silence, or stupidity, if it must be so, probably led Miss Flint to pursue the thread of the conversation which I had interrupted; for, turning to Mr. Snughead, she said—"But, as I was saying, Mr. Snughead, is it not your duty to prevent Wilson and his people from instantly occupying the only pew in the church open to strangers? It is really ridiculous to see such people so misplaced!"—"I have no authority to prevent them," answered he. "The whole chancel is attached to the claims of Wilson, as the proprietor of the abbey lands. It was merely owing to accident he was not my patron for the living instead of yourself, for his uncle would have purchased it of your father; and Wilson might, if he pleased, place his servants in your pew; for, in fact, you

even the mortified Pascal would have shrunk; for I think it may be presumed, that by not eating his soup Pascal's penetential girdle was bearable; but poor Mr. Snughead cannot be at his ease either full or fasting. He imitates in barbarity the fell Procrastes, for his cloaths are made by a measure that has never been enlarged since the day of his gentility, and his unfortunate person, like the victim to the iron couch, is doomed to suffer under ligatures as painful as the rack. He seems momentarily in danger of suffocation, and I could not, without pity, hear him so often complain of the "melting weather," nor view unmoved his hand instinctively raised to his cravat in order to relieve his respiration. But Mr. Snughead's stoical firmness consoled me, and I next examined his dress. But what pen, my Lucy, can do justice to the elaborate neatness of this canonical beau! Who can describe the glossy black robes, the

polished shoes, the dazzling whiteness and texture of his linen! In what language shall I convey to your imagination the honours of his head, his tight, perfumed, well-powdered curls! I despair; you must even fancy perfection. The frequent application of a well-scented, delicate cambric handkerchief to his face, gave me an opportunity of discovering that it was not his tight lacing which had impelled his hand to his throat, but the desire of exhibiting this precious relic of former beauty; for although somewhat in shape dropsical, it yet retains its whiteness, and is properly distinguished by a sumptuous amethyst ring encircled with brilliants. I was diverted from further observation, by his abruptly addressing me with, "Well, my pretty young lady, what say you to our north roads? Is not this a very pleasant one? What do you think of that prospect in view?" I coldly replied, that the village looked pleasant; and turning

plied I, laughing, "that Mrs. Heartley imposes on all ages. This will keep me in counteaance, should the conclusions I have drawn from her appearance be erroneous. I took notice that all the females on the benches rose and curteseyed to her as she passsed through the aisle at church." "So they would to Wilson's dung cart," answered he, laughing and shewing his large white teeth, "for the same return. They have *Madam* Wilson's skimmed milk in their mouths, and her Christmas plumb-pudding in perspective; and for these they would bend their knees and their necks ten times a day, athough they are so insolent to their betters."—"You forget," observed Miss Flint, "that they owe some civility to the *village doctress*."—"True," answered he, "I forgot their obligations to Mrs. Heartley's James's powder and her worm-cakes, but I owe her no gratitude on that score; for if she go on, my surplice

fees will be diminished, and the sexton will starve."—"You are the drollest of mortals!" cried the exulting Miss Flint, "but a truce with your wit. You well know my motives for removing Mary from Wilson's. I had solid reasons for thinking the society she had in that house improper for her. I wish to caution Miss Cowley, without offending her. Are you not convinced that, if Sir Murdock had been a rational man, he would have judged, as Lady Maclairn and myself have done, that Mrs. Heartley and her daughter had no claims to Miss Cowley's notice?"

"Upon my word you perplex me," replied the sapient divine, passing his clay-coloured hand over his violet face, "I know so little of these ladies! nothing indeed, but from report. My wife from the first had your scruples. I know not any *genteel* family that visits them. They say the mother is a very *lively* woman,

and no one can dispute the charms of Miss Alice! Our young man, Banks, was one of her admirerers; but his mother did not approve of the intimacy between him and Harry Heartley. This gave offence, and the ladies overlook their pastor. I should imagine Miss Cowley would act with prudence, to be on the reserve with ladies who do not visit at the hall."—The straggling party approached us, and our conversation finished.—To my great relief, I found that Miss Flint only waited their return, to bid adieu to the captain; pleading her engagement, and the moon, for passing the evening with "poor Mrs. Snughead."—The carriage which was in waiting immediately appeared, and, with much formality, the Reverend Mr. Snughead took his leave.

All nature seemed to respire more freely as well as myself, after Mr. Snughead's departure. The evening was indeed an Italian one, and Lady Maclairn

contrived to impart to it the charms which so often embellished those at Heathcot. We had a regale of fruit in the avenue, and every one was freed from constraint, and disposed for enjoyment. No, your poor Rachel was not in harmony with the scene. My spirits had been exhausted, and I felt unusually languid. I found a luxury in tears, and I sauntered from the circle. I could not check my imagination: it fondly traced our happy days. The regales of strawberries in the root-house; our Bacchanalian revelries under the mulberry trees, where we retaliated the mischief done to our frocks, by smearing Horace's face with the impurpled juice; our dear father's plots and contrivances, at hide and seek, and our mother's tales of wisdom and wonder! Oh, days of innocence and of peace! how soon departed! whilst the remembrances of your pure joys serve but to heighten the contrast of

those hours of my existence which are now lost to me! What has Rachel Cowley in common with such beings as those who have tormented her to-day, thought I! There are those who maintain, that in order to love virtue, we must know vice: but far be from me such experiments! I want no hideous contrasts to shew me her genuine work! I have witnessed that all her "paths are pleasantness," and all her purposes gracious! What, under her benign influence, has been done with that turbulent self-will which, when a child, menaced me with destruction! of that ignorance and presumption which would have rendered me pernicious to my fellow creatures! What had I been, Lucy, had I not been sheltered in the very bosom of virtue? and am I a companion for a Miss Flint, or a Mr. Snughead?"

I was roused from a train of thoughts like these by the sweet Mary. She approached me. "Are you indisposed, my

dear Miss Cowley? You look fatigued,—take my arm: we will retire to the house. I raised my tearful eyes; the very image of pity binding up the wounded foot of the pilgrim, met them. I recollected myself. I remembered it was *Mary's* holiday; and that my dejection clouded her hour of satisfaction. I pressed her hand, and joined my friends with assumed alacrity. She understood me, and I was recompensed for my exertions. Gaiety gave place to a rational conversation. Captain Flint talked of America, and my spirits settled into composure; but I have been too busy to-day for sleep, and you have to read my nightly labours. It is now the hour when the disturbed spirits are recalled home. I will obey the voice of chanticleer, and go to bed. Sleeping or waking, I shall ever be your affectionate,

RACHEL COWLEY.

NOTE TO THE READER.

FINDING nothing important to my history during the course of several weeks' correspondence, so punctually maintained by Miss Cowley, I have suppressed a few letters, to avoid the censure of prolixity.

Amongst the causes assigned in her letters at this time for her dejection of mind, she mentions the absence of her friends from the Abbey, who, it appears, were on an excursion to Hartley-Pool, a bathing-place not very remote from them. She dwells, however, with much more inquietude on the condition of Miss Howard. She observes, that her uncle's absence has still more lessened these observances of civility which Miss Flint had practised. Her indignation daily augments, by perceiving Lady Maclairn's increasing reserve on the subject of Miss

Howard's unworthy treatment.—" To what purpose serve her downcast eyes and varying colour," writes Miss Cowley, " when at table she hears Miss Flint tell the servant, that *Mary's* plate needs no change? The very footman blushes. Why does she not insist on every one's equality at her table? Surely, Lucy, the Gospel does not recommend with the spirit of peace, an insensibility to oppression! It is, however, too much for me to witness; and I am determined to have some conversation with Captain Flint when he returns. Something shall be done to mitigate this poor girl's sufferings. I suspect she dares not complain to her uncle. I will do it for her, and trust to the event. I disdain that humanity which shrinks from active service, and can quiet its feelings by exhalting its sighs in *useless pity* and *fretful censures.*"—" But," adds she, renewing her wonted spirit, " I am called to or-

der. My dear Mrs. Allen is sounding in my ears her direful predictions in regard to girls who love scribbling better than sleep, and sentiment better than roast beef. As pale faces bring up the rear of the evils she has mustered to frighten me, I will be docile, though to tell you the truth, her brow of tender solicitude has subdued me. How often have I drawn on her treasures of health! how often has she relinquished repose in order to watch over my infant wailings, and sickly frowardness! Never shall a care reach that bosom on which my head has rested, if I can prevent it! So I will go to bed. What an age it is since you have had letters from Horace! Ah! Lucy, you must pity Rachel Cowley, for she is discontented with herself, though always your

RACHEL COWLEY.

CHAP VII.

A Letter dated in October, and addressed to Miss Hardcastle, is fortunately recovered, and the thread of the narrative, which I found was broken, is by that means preserved. Trusting that my readers are by this time satisfied that Miss Cowley can tell her own story; and are convinced that no labours of mine could better tell it, I cheerfully resume my humble office of copyist.

LETTER XI.

From Miss Cowley to Miss Hardcastle.

I send you, my dear Lucy, with my thanks to Counsellor Steadman for his

letter, one which I have received from Mr. Flamall. You will find that I have an enormous account to settle with him on the score of *gratitude;* for the kind-hearted gentleman, not having yet smoothed the way for my *sweetheart's* appearance, has sent a double portion of *sweetmeats*, and withal, many compliments on my *sweet* and gentle temper, which, it appears, fame has celebrated in the island of Jamaica. I would divide with you this tribute of praise, were it not the first my unparallelled gentleness and patience ever received; but I will be generous notwithstanding: and as we have here as many preserved limes, &c. as would satisfy the cravings of half the boarding-school misses in London, I have desired all mine may be sent to Heathcot: you will dispose of them in due measure to your neighbours. My friends and neighbours returned to the Abbey last night. To-morrow I shall pass the day at Mrs.

Heartley's, when I shall give her the counsellor's letter. I do most seriously assure you, that my late indisposition has disappeared. Your accounts from Italy were the specifics for the worst part of it; and without detracting from the good effects of the new curricle, I must attribute my cure to your prescription. Lady Maclairn's anxiety has not been less than yours, my dear Lucy, on the subject of medical advice; but I knew the medicine I wanted—it was not in the apothecary's shop. The curricle is, however, still in favour, for it amuses Sir Murdock, and he is proud of being charioteer. You cannot imagine with what tenderness and attention I am treated by Lady Maclairn. I cannot help loving her; but I wish also to reverence her. It hurts me to see her sink herself and her talents, in order to sooth and keep quiet a woman who might be taught to respect her. She never offends

or disappoints me but when I see her forget Lady Maclairn, and act the part of a mere cringing dependent. I find she has by dint of coaxing and tears, obtained permission for Mary to go with us to the Abbey to-morrow, in order to see her uncle. Mrs. Warner, Miss Flint's favourite servant, communicated these glad tidings to Mrs. Allen, and concluded by saying, "Aye, they will never understand my lady's temper. Miss Howard should have gone without asking leave, and Lady Maclairn should have commended her for taking it for granted she had a right to go to see the captain. Miss Flint is not the better for being indulged in her temper. I do my duty; she knows I am faithful, but she knows also that I will not be her slave. It often vexes me to see Miss Howard so much afraid of her! Why not say from the very first, 'I will go and see my uncle, Madam.' Instead of this, there are plead-

ings and tears, which have gained after all, only leave to stay a few minutes with the captain. As to Lady Maclairn, there is something to say. The golden-calf will have its worshippers still; so she must bend the knee: but poor Mary has no such hopes, and she is a simpleton not to shew more spirit."—This woman is well-intentioned to Miss Howard, and, I believe, contributes to her comforts; for she asked Mrs. Allen to lend her Evelina to read to Mary whilst she worked. She usually sits with her in a little parlour appropriated to Warner: Miss Flint prefering being alone in her *lair*. I shall not finish this letter till I have seen my friends at the farm, having to write to Mr. Steadman.

Saturday Evening, Nine O'clock.

Not chusing to part with the serenity I have brought home with me, I hav

left my friends in the parlour in order to finish the day happily with you. Perhaps there was also a little discretion at the bottom of this intention when first suggested. I wished to avoid Mary's first greeting from her aunt, whose orders she had disobeyed; but on inquiry, the lady had retired for the night before we reached the hall. Miss Flint's sleeping draught is sometimes potent, I suspect; and Mrs. Patty, our maid, never fails to say on these sudden drowsy fits, "Ah, poor lady, she is much to be pitied! for there is nothing like the sleep God sends." Leaving, however, Miss Lucretia to enjoy any repose she can purchase, I will prepare for mine by an hour's chit-chat with my Lucy. We sallied forth this morning for our visit to the Abbey. Never did summer bequeath to her boisterous brother October a more delicious one! Mary was of the party;

but she was not in spirits. Jonathan, Miss Flint's footman, followed our steps. I had my project in my head; for I had determined that this exertion of Miss Flint's power should not pass unnoticed. We had not proceeded more than half our road to the Abbey, before we were met by the captain and the Heartleys. Mary's philosophy forsook her on perceiving them. "How unpardonable I am," said she, "now I have no pretence for going farther with you! I must return with the servant." You may conclude that this observation was conveyed to the captain's ear. He coloured, and with some quickness in his manner turned to the servant, saying, "You need go no farther. I shall take care of Miss Howard." The man bowed, and retreating, seemed yet to hesitate. "Inform your lady, Sir, "added the captain with dignity, "that my niece passes the day with me and her *friends*, and that I shall call

on her soon." Jonathan, with a low bow, quickened his pace.

"Indeed! indeed!" cried Mary, "I must not disobey orders, my aunt will be disobliged!"—"I will be answerable for that," replied the captain with gravity; "but in your attention to your *aunt*, Mary, do not forget your *uncle*, nor what is due to yourself." It was some time before this little cloud passed; but it was dissipated by the time we reached the farm, and Mary's welcome from Mrs. Wilson apparently banished Miss Flint and her *orders* from her thoughts.

I do not remember mentioning to you the noble apartments which Mrs. Heartley occupies in the Abbey. But her taste has given to them an appearance of comfort, light, and cheerfulness, which in my opinion more than supplies the absence of the magnificence, which gave the finish to dark and richly carved wain-

scoting and bow windows, half glazed with painted glass. A good selection of books, in handsome glass-cases, gay chintz furniture, and an excellent musical instrument, assuredly suited better the assembled party, and are much more congenial with the love of neatness and order of the present inmates of the house. But should it happen that any of the departed spirits of the "Ingram" race still hover near the spot of their glory, they must, if they be placable, acknowledge, that although cumbrous greatness is fallen, hospitality still retains her empire in the house; and that those vices which ruined themselves and half the county, are buried in the fallen fabric of Gothic ignorance and superstition. After dinner we had music, which at least vied with the lute and virginal of former times. The Heartleys, I find, are all gifted with a taste for harmony. The mother is an excellent performer on the

harpsichord; and her daughter shews that skill in the science so necessary in the teacher, to produce a pupil like Alice. Mary was pressed for a song. "I have forgotten all I know for want of practice," said she with a suppressed sigh. "I will sing with you, my love," replied Mrs. Heartley, "and we shall manage very well." She was encouraged, and timidly sung the little ballad of Prior's, "In vain you tell your panting lover," with taste and expression. "Bravo, my sweet Mary," observed Mrs. Heartley with a smile, "you have not forgotten that song at least. You would recover in a month all you have lost." Elated by this commendation, she turned towards me, and with eagerness observed, that Henry Heartley had taught her not only to sing that song, but to admire the poetry and composition; "for," added she, "Henry was an Orpheus, even in his cradle! I have heard Mrs. Heartley

say, that she used to quiet him when a baby, by playing upon the piano forte. How happy we used to be when he was here!" Mrs. Wilson's calling her away prevented Mary from proceeding on a subject which seemed to have placed her heart on her lips.

I forgot not to deliver the counsellor's letter to his old favourite; Mrs. Heartley ran it over with apparent satisfaction, and give it me to peruse. "I will thank him myself," said she, "for this proof of his remembrance; I needed none of his candour and justice. He knew me before I was a wife, he knew me as one, and he *knows* that Heartley's widow lives to honour his memory, and to perpetuate his virtues in his children." She pressed my hand with emotion, and smiling through the tears which escaped her, observed that she was yet selfish and weak.

I will not say that we became noisy

after tea, but it is certain that we were childishly gay. The delighted Mrs. Wilson, followed by the young people, made the circuit of her domains. The dairy, the cheese-chamber, the poultry-yard were explored, and poor Malcolm was left a while in captivity in the pig-stye, for his daring crime of attempting to give Alice a green gown. By means of that secret intelligence at which you so wickedly laugh, Mrs. Wilson and myself were old friends in half an hour. She found out that Miss Cowley was not a fine lady; and Miss Cowley discovered that the farmer's wife was worth all the fine ladies that have ever swarmed as butterflies of the hour. She brought to my mind the very image of the good woman before Rhadamanthus, and I doubt not but she could as satisfactorily demand his passport; for though she has not a daughter to produce as a notable housewife, yet she has made as many cheeses

r counterpart, and will trace as
rous a progeny to bless her me-

seconded my motion for the fami-
walk home with us, and it was
d to, with certain limitations as to
me and extent of our demands;
were forgotten by each in their

length we set out on our return
; a cloudless sky, and a full-orbed
not only favoured us, but there
serenity in the air which is seldom
in so advanced a season, and which
d to favour the still lingering leaf
rembled on its parent stem. There
ething in a calm autumnal evening
so resembles the closing in of a
pent life, that it naturally leads the
to contemplation, nay, to a *pensive*-
though not melancholy, which
s not noisy folly." Our gay spirits
d to the influence of the objects

her uncle, felt all her terrors return. "What would her aunt say to her? and what was she to say to her aunt? She would not believe her." Mrs. Allen engaged to stand as witness; and Malcolm encouraged her by saying, "My mother will plead your cause, never fear." But I verily believe the poor girl felt it, as a respite from violence when Warner told her that Miss Flint was asleep.

Mrs. Allen sends her blessing, and your Rachel Cowley remains your affectionate Sister and Friend.

LETTER XII.

Rachel Cowley to Miss Hardcastle.

You will, my dear Lucy, when you have read this letter, commend me for my caution. "I am well, and all here are well, thank God for it!" Do not how-

ever fancy that I have not had an escape, although the curricle has not been overset, nor have I had a cold and sore throat in consequence of my night walk.

In my last I mentioned that poor Mary had suffered from being out so late; but that her aunt wisely recollecting that Sunday was the captain's visiting day, graciously admitted Mrs. Allen's evidence in favour of the poor culprit; and that our Sabbath was a day of peace as well as rest. I heard nothing of colds or rheums that day.—On Monday, Mary was kept hard at work upon the odious carpet. I rode out with Sir Murdock in the morning of the following day, and on our return found your dear letter. All was peace, in consequence, in your Rachel's bosom. But at dinner no counterfeiting could conceal from me the disorder which Lady Maclairn took such pains to hide. It is incredible to conceive, what a command of features

this woman has acquired! But I detest her when she dares not speak with frankness. There is a tremulous play of the muscles round her mouth, and a slowness in her utterance that mark the struggle within. On enquiring for Miss Flint and Mary, who did not appear, we were told that Miss Flint had a most oppressive nervous head-ach, and that Miss Howard had gotten a sore throat.—On Wednesday, both the invalids were worse; for the aunt was uneasy on Mary's account who was feverish. "Sir Murdock was, however, to be amused." He might fancy it would turn to a putrid sore throat and be alarmed. It is a pity, thought I, whilst Lady Maclairn made all these excuses for imposition, that nature had not given you a different complexion! I was certain, Lucy, that there was some mystery in this business. Warner kept close, and Mrs. Patty said that Miss Howard kept her bed. I do not love mischief; there-

fore, to amuse my good baronet, who appeared somewhat discomfited by the sudden change in the weather, and his lady's frequent desertion of him in order to attend the sick, I engaged him to settle us in our winter quarters, and to make shelves for the books lately sent me from town. Two days incessant rain were thus passed; and we learned that the valetudinarians were recovering.—On Sunday, Mrs. Allen and myself went to church in the morning; and I was requested to say to Captain Flint, that Mary had been indisposed with a *cold.*" "He will find her altered," added her ladyship with one of her unlucky blushes; "she has been very ill." I asked her whether there had been any appearance of danger in the case. "No," replied she, "but her aunt has been much distressed on her account. They mean to dine below to-day, lest the captain should be uneasy."

I delivered my commission with the same precaution it was given me, and whilst I was satisfying Mary's friends on the subject, Mr. Snughead passed me with a supercilious bow, without taking off his hat. On entering the parlour we found it heated by a large fire; it was really suffocating. Miss Flint, huddled up in wrappers, had taken possession of the great chair on one side of it. Mary, with a face as pale as death, in a close morning cap, a muslin cravat, and a shawl closely pinned up, had her appointed station on the other side. Her cheek glowed however on seeing us; but she appeared fluttered and weak. Our congratulations followed, whilst the captain looking with much seriousness at her, said, "My dear child, why was I not informed of your being ill?—"It was only a cold, Sir," answered Mary with a faint blush. "And a cold she has to thank you for," said the sister. "Night

walks in October do not suit Mary. It is well it was no worse, I expected only a putrid fever." The servants, for we are old fashioned people on a Sunday, had by this time covered the table; and a smoaking sirloin graced the bottom of it. Mary rose from her seat in visible disorder, oppressed, as I thought, by the heat of the room, and the savoury steams of the dinner; but as she tottered to the door, she burst into hysterical sobbings, and Malcolm and myself prevented her falling, for she fainted in our arms. Malcolm placed her in a chair in the vestibule. All was hurry and alarm. Whilst others were searching for remedies, and her uncle was supporting her head, I hazarded to open the door into the garden, observing that the air was mild, and would restore her. It evidently was useful, for she gave signs of returning consciousness, but again relapsed. "Take off that cravat," said I,

"and let her have more air. I opened the sash, which was nearer to her than the door. Whilst giving this direction, the captain obeyed. Judge of our sensations! Her throat was black and bruised by a violent grasp, and her bosom lacerated by what appeared to be the strokes of a cane or horse-whip. "God of Heaven and of earth!" groaned out the captain, "what means all this? To what am I doomed!"—"My dear captain," said the almost breathless Lady Maclairn, who now approached with some remedy, "have patience, all shall be explained. Your sister has been to blame; she is sensible of it: she bitterly repents of her violence: she has suffered, severely suffered for it; all will still be well, only have patience." He heeded her not, but with a look of horror and apparent calmness, he surveyed for some moments the marks of the outrage which had been committed; then wrapping the

shawl round the still insensible girl, he attempted to raise her in his arms; but they refused the office. Miss Flint now ventured to open the door, to order the servants to be summoned, and to carry Mary upstairs, loudly reprehending us for exposing her to the air. "Shame to thy sex, begone!" cried the captain with fury. "Urge me not, thou barbarian! But art thou not here to exult over thy victim?" He again drew off the shawl. "This is Howard's child, Lucretia!" continued he, "this is thy sister's orphan!" A heavy sigh from Mary drew his attention again; he attempted to raise her; but his limbs trembled to that degree, that he was forced to desist. The prompt, the ever-succouring Allen gave Malcolm a sign. He took Mary in his arms, and carried her to my room, followed by Mrs. Allen. The captain was on the point of doing so likewise, when Miss Lucretia darting towards him, and

catching his coat, exclaimed, "You *shall* hear me! She provoked me."— No language can convey to you, Lucy, the expression with which he replied. "Yes! I doubt it not! So did her hapless virtuous mother! so did her noble-minded father!" He paused, and raising his eyes to Heaven, moved his lips as though in silent ejaculation. "No," said he in a solemn tone of voice, "I will not curse her! But," added he, "*God*, Lucretia, will call you to answer for this deed!" "Hear me! only hear me!" screamed she. "I only punished her *insolence*. I will justify myself!"—"Never canst thou do *that*," replied he, "where humanity resides." He broke from her and turned into the garden. A violent fit succeeded to Miss Flint's efforts; the servants with difficulty conveyed her, in her struggles, to her apartment, from whence even I heard her screams. On entering my room, I found Miss Howard laid on the

bed, and much recovered though weeping. "What confusion! what mischief have I occasioned!" said she addressing me. "Who was it, my dear Miss Cowley, who took off my things? Was it not my uncle? How unfortunate that I could not get up stairs!"—"Say not so," observed the soothing Mrs. Allen, "but rather, my dear child, be thankful to Providence who has thus seasonably checked your aunt's violence; such a temper required it." Mr. Flint entered the room. no longer was his face gloomy, and his eyes sparkling with rage. He was pale and languid, and sitting down by his niece, he shed tears like an infant. "The coach is preparing," said he at length, "can you make the effort my child? I leave not this accursed house without you."—"I am much better, I am able to go any where with you," replied the poor girl; "but my dear, dear uncle! leave not my aunt in displeasure; indeed she

is very sorry for what has passed, indeed I had entirely forgiven her."—"Name her not," answered the captain with emotion; "go to your parents' grave; see the work *there!* Remember the protection she promised you! But I will be just," continued he, suppressing his rising passions, "to my credulity, to my *easy* faith, you must attribute these scourges. But who," continued he, turning to us, "could have conceived that any hand could have inflicted such cruelty on a creature like *this*, and that hand a sister's! But we will depart, my child, tothat home where your bruises will be healed, and I shall be justly reproved for the pride and ambition which caused them. Your asylum is secure, and you will have bread and peace."

My hitherto restrained tears now flowed abundantly: it was well for me they did, for the throbbing in my temples was excruciating. I attempted to speak; but I

could only say with extreme emotion, "Dismiss your fears for her, her happiness shall be my care." A look was the thanks I received. The coach drew up, and Malcolm entered the room. Whilst Mrs. Allen prepared Mary, he said in a whisper, "I leave my father to you. Miss Flint is in strong convulsions, the doctor is sent for, and my mother is dreadfully alarmed." He carried Mary to the carriage, and accompanied her and the captain to the Abbey.

Mrs. Allen went to assist Lady Maclairn, and I to perform a duty which was become pressing, for I had not seen Sir Murdock from the first signal of alarm. I recollected this circumstance with a sensation of terror undefinable at this moment; and quickening my steps, met a servant whom I believe I frightened by my eagerness, for in reply to my question, he said, with some hesitation of manner, that he had seen Sir Murdock go into

the garden, and, if I pleased, he would go with me to look for him. I saw the conclusion he had drawn, and therefore with collected ease, replied that I should soon meet him.

For sometime, however, the object of my search eluded me; at last I perceived him sitting in a nook so concealed, that it serves the gardener for his rollers, &c. He resembled a statue rather than a living creature; and was so lost in thought, that he neither heard my steps nor saw me when I stood before him. He was speaking, however, and I heard him say, "Are there no remedies? Is she dead? Will not Heaven spare her? Destruction must have monsters for its work!"—I took his hand and he started. "I come to seek you," said I, in a cheerful tone; "Miss Howard is recovered, and gone home with her uncle. I want you to give me some coffee." He looked at me.—"Angel of peace!" said he, in a low

voice, "art thou still near me?"—I again spoke. "Your daughter, your adopted daughter, my dear Sir Murdock, is near you," observed I, "but you do not heed her. It is cold here, and she begs you to enter the house." I gently took him by the arm; he again started as from a dream.—"My dear Miss Cowley," said he, rising, "is it you that I see here!"—I repeated my entreaties, and he instantly took the way to the house and inquired whether Miss Howard had seen his wife before she left the hall. "Lady Maclairn has been with Miss Flint," replied I, "who is ill; but we shall all rejoice at the events of this day when more composed. Mary Howard shall never want the protection of her aunt."—"Your purpose is worthy of you, Miss Cowley," replied the baronet, with collected dignity and energy, "and in your intentions of goodness, as these relate to this injured girl, your path is not only easy

but pleasant. But what can you do or say for Sir Murdock Maclairn and his wife, under whose ostensible roof innocence has been oppressed and ill-used? My supposed infirmity of mind,—would to God it were only supposition!—may screen me from ignominy with the charitable. But can generosity or candour find an apology for my wife? Will it not be said, and with truth, that she was a daily witness of the improper treatment which Miss Howard received from her aunt? Will it not be said, that she knew of the outrage committed recently; and that, in order to spare the offender, she concealed it from the poor suffering girl's friends? Will censure stop here? Oh, no! it will be alledged that lady Maclairn encouraged this woman in her cruelty!"—"The most confirmed rancour would refuse to credit such a tale of Lady Maclairn, if told," answered with seriouness. "There is not a men

in her family would not refute it, and bear witness to her gentleness and humanity. Every one has seen her unremitting attentions to Miss Howard's comfort, and her endeavours to render her aunt kinder to her. She trusted that Mary's assiduities would, in time, soften down the asperities of Miss Flint's temper. She knew that her interference would be liable to misconstructions; and though she has suffered but little less than Miss Howard, since her residence here, yet she has not dared to oppose her remaining, lest it should be thought that she feared her influence might be unfriendly to her son's interest. I have seen Lady Maclairn's difficulties from the first hour of my being here," continued I, "I have seen her miserable on this poor girl's account; and I am certain she was a stranger to the treatment she has lately undergone."—"You plead to a partial hearer," answered he, deeply sighing; "I know that to my Harriot

a scene of such violence would have bee
death. But is it not incomprehensi
ble to you how such a mind as her
should have retained for this woman a
affection so determined and so constant
Why does she persist in living with her
Why subject herself to mortifications and
degradations to please her caprice?"—
"Lady Maclairn is human;" replied I
with a smile, "she is a mother, and
tender mother; and she may, with jus
tice, expect that her son Philip will b
benefited by these sacrifices of her car
Besides these motives, there are other
more exalted, which prompt her zea
What would this woman have been
What would she be without Lady Mac
lairn? To whom is she indebted for th
little humanity which she does shew?"—
The baronet appeared silently to ac
quiesce in my sentiments; but I found h
was again withdrawn into his own mind
I, however, found it not difficult t
rouse him; for on my observing th

poor Lady Maclairn would be anxious for his safety in so chilling an air, he quickened his steps. His wife was indeed anxious! She burst into tears on seeing him, and the interesting Sir Murdock seemed to have no care but that of soothing her distress. "You must listen to Miss Cowley, my Harriot," said he, "she will teach you to rejoice at the captive's deliverance."—"I could and should rejoice," answered she, "that poor Mary is freed from the hardest of all servitudes, did I not see Lucretia so struck with a sense of her fault and disgrace as to be in danger of her life. She is an unhappy woman," added she, with emotion, "and I cannot help pitying her." No reply was made. Mrs. Allen now entered with the coffee, and I found by her report, that in getting Miss Flint to her room, the servants, unable to hold her in her struggles, had let her slip from their arms, and she had hurt her knee very much; she was, however, asleep;

the doctor had seen her, and the servar had got a respite. Mary was compos and much better. I retired to m room, and continued to solace m mind by viewing this day of Mary emancipation as a happy event. I reall considered the horse-whipping part c the business with the stoical indifferenc of a mail-coach driver, when I contraste it with the good effects it was likely t produce. In a week Mary may forge the discipline, and all will be well; but sincerely wish it may lead Miss Flint t consider whether it might not turn t good account to scourge *herself*. Mo derate flagellation would neither hurt he temper of body or mind.—But lest yo should be induced to think unfavourabl of my tender mercies, I shall conclude thi letter; and you will, I trust, give th kiss of peace to your

RACHEL COWLEY

END OF VOL. I.

LADY MACLAIRN,

THE

VICTIM OF VILLANY.

A NOVEL.

IN FOUR VOLUMES.

BY MRS. HUNTER,

OF NORWICH,

AUTHOR OF LETITIA; THE UNEXPECTED LEGACY; THE HISTORY OF THE GRUBTHORPE FAMILY; PALMERSTONE'S LETTERS, &c. &c.

VOL. II.

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1806.

[Bernard and Sultzer, Water Lane, Fleet Street.]

LADY MACLAIRN,

THE

VICTIM OF VILLANY.

CHAP. I.

LETTER XIII.

Miss Cowley to Miss Hardcastle.

Wednesday Evening.

I Know, my dear Lucy, that you will expect the sequel of the disastrous tale contained in my last letter; and that you will very ingeniously contrive to muster up many conclusive arguments to prove that Rachel Cowley's health will be absolutely ruined at Tarefield. Facts are, however, stubborn things. She has passed this trial of her strength without

a fever on her nerves, notwithstandi a cold which, on Monday and yesterda gave her a pretence for keeping her apar ment and nursing the poor baronet.

On the Monday morning Malcol gave me to understand, with visible u easiness, that his father had betaken hin self to the lately deserted room, with t grated windows, and he implored me t endeavour to allure him from it. I wro a card instantly, informing him I waite breakfast for him, and that I had a ne book for his perusal. It succeeded but I was shocked to see the effects *one* night's disturbance of that min which we had exultingly seen settling int tranquillity. He was shivering and lan guid, and told his wife he had taken cold but she perceived, as well as myself, tha he was dispirited and extremely nervous Nothing can equal this woman! To se her at this moment, I could not but lov her. She was calm and cheerful; sooth

ing and tender; whilst in a thousand various ways she diverted his attention; and although I knew she had watched at Miss Flint's bedside from three o'clock, she did not name her, nor did she appear fatigued. I took my turn to be good, and, dismissing her, said, that as I had also a cold, the valetudinarians would have but one infirmary; that she might dispose of Mrs. Allen, for we meant to be in the sullens and read. Sir Murdock raised his dejected head; the eye was animated, and I was contented. I took my work and placed before him the Vicar of Wakefield. "Shall I not read it aloud?" asked he.—"No," replied I, "unless you find a passage that particularly strikes you." He bowed, for Sir Murdock Maclairn is the truly polite man. I soon perceived that his attention was engaged. Whose is not, Lucy, by that work? This made me happy; yes, happy, I repeat, for I reverence this in-

esting man; and I believe there is a
tal grief which will, whilst he lives,
ppress his mind. Mrs. Allen soon
oined us; she was also the invalid;
but it slackened not her industry. She
took up your hearth-rug. Her dose of
camphor-julap went round, and Gold-
smith had too many beauties for the
baronet to be long silent. The morning
thus glided away, and we dined where
we were. Malcolm, with undissembled
joy, found us comfortable, and the
evening was given to the chess-board. I
slept, Lucy, for I had passed the day in
blunting the barbed arrow, which, if I
am not much mistaken, still wounds
SirMurdock.—Tuesday was fair; I want-
ed a ride; the curricle and my knight
were in readiness; and we returned home
the better for our long airing. This
morning it was Mrs. Allen's turn to wish
for a ride, and the good Sir Murdock
with alacrity indulged her wish.

Malcolm and myself, immediately after their departure, took the road to the Abbey. To say the truth, I felt a little fine-ladyish, and walked not with my usual alertness. My good natured escort, perceived it. "I am astonished," observed he, slackening his pace, and offering me his arm, "to see your spirits and perseverance! You are now so fatigued, that any other but yourself would fancy this walk improper for you."—"The sun cheers me," replied I, "and idleness will yield to this bracing air."—"Your motives," answered he, "will always give animation and vigour to your mind; for it seems to me, that it is the business of your life to communicate joy or consolation to all around you! Tell me," continued he, "that your recompence is adequate to your labours. In the absence of your accustomed amusements, remote from friends endeared to you by time and experience, and qualified for that pre-

ference you must feel for them, I see
cheerful, and apparently contented,
situation marked for the residence
care; but my admiration of your
nanimity, Miss Cowley, has not,
cannot lessen my regrets at seeing
sacrificed to these duties by an usur
authority over your freedom. Tare
cannot be otherwise than a place of
nishment to you."—"Spare your
passion, my good friend," answered
"till you have my warrant for indulg
it. I should be ungrateful, as well
childish, were I discontented in yo
mother's society. I am sensible of t
constant attention paid to my comfor
by every individual in your family; a
I do most sincerely assure you, that I
as happy at Tarefield, as I should be a
where, under the peculiar circumstanc
in which I am at present."—"We migh
be more worthy of you," replied he wi
seriousness, "were we not slaves ou

selves; but, notwithstanding your generous assertion, I have myself witnessed your surprise and vexation at my mother's submissions to Miss Flint, and at the subordinate station she fills in her own house, for such is at present Tarefield-hall. It cannot but appear extraordinary to you, to see two women so diametrically opposite in character and temper as my mother and this woman, so connected, that neither the capricious exactions on the one part, nor the decided love of praise and independence on the other, can weaken the ties which have united them. It is by no means a solution of this enigma with me, to be reminded, that my mother submits to this galling yoke from the consideration of her son Philip's interest. I know she is neither sordid nor designing; and that she would prefer poverty, were she at liberty to chuse, rather than invade on the least of my father's wishes, much less

his happiness; yet she is well aware *for years* Tarefield has been irksom him. Sometimes I think," cont Malcolm, "that my mother bou herself bound to the fulfilment of promise made to her first husband, to re for her life with his favourite daug Mr. Flint might, without any miracu powers, have foreseen that neithe wealth nor Lucretia's qualities, coul cure her, if destitute of a friend lik mother, who has incessantly labour humanize her. But I am persuaded, if such a promise had paused her lips would have thought it sacred; and she was once on the point of breakin chains."—Malcolm paused, as expe my answer. "I have been told," served I, "that Miss Flint once your uncle; may not this circumst have had its weight with Lady Macl "It has not been overlooked by answered Malcolm; "but if ther

did exist a mutual passion between Flamall and Miss Flint, it was worn out before I could discover it, or rather converted into mutual hatred; except on one point of agreement, that of favouring their idol Philip, and tormenting me. Their marked partiality was one means employed to render my mother miserable; and as for myself, I can with truth affirm that my infant enjoyments, my youthful pleasures, and I might add, the best affections of my nature, were contracted and checked by the influence of Mr. Flamall and the jealousy of Miss Flint. It is the peculiar privilege of my *cunning* uncle, Miss Cowley, to effect his purposes by exciting *fear;* and, extraordinary as it may appear to you, he had not only established its empire over my meek mother, but also, over the tirmagant Miss Flint. She was taught by him, to consider me, even when in my cradle, as an intruder on Philip's rights.

She regarded my mother's attachment to me as unjust, and defrauding that child of its exclusive claims to love. My mother suckled me herself; her health had not admitted of this duty when Philip was born; and from this advantage, I conceive, resulted her apprehensions, that my dear mother loved me better than she did my brother. How little was this woman qualified to judge of lady Maclairn!" continued Malcolm with emotion. "Her wisdom alone counteracted the pernicious effects of these prejudices, longer than could have been expected. Philip was my senior by nearly two years: he was a sweet-tempered child, and, directed by his mother, constantly disposed to play with me; but I was a sturdy, active boy, and soon equal to Philip in strength and stature. His compliances with my wishes were checked by his uncle and aunt, as being improper, and leading him into mischief. My daring

spirit was called an *insolent* one, and my careless indifference to favour, was stiled *obduracy* and *stubbornness.* Secure of my mother's protection, and contented with my own pursuits, I continued to live with Philip on good terms, till I saw preparations going forward for his being placed at Harrow school. Conscious that I had abilities for learning, I felt mortified, that no plan for my improvement had been thought of; and I saw Philip depart with emotions not remote from envy.

"From that hour, I felt ill-will towards my unoffending brother, and was stimulated by a proud sense of injustice, to shun his kindness, and to refuse his good offices. At this junction, I found a welcome at Mr. Wilson's house, and a companion and friend in Henry Heartley. Mr. Flamall and Miss Flint were displeased with the frequency of my visits. I was lectured by my uncle, and sternly ad-

monished not to go to the Abbey. 'My mother approves of my going there,' replied I, 'and as I am not sent to school like my brother, it is my business to get learning where I can find it.' 'And who prevents your mother sending you to school?' replied he with a sneer: 'some of your Scotch relations would find and instruct you for ten pounds a year, and get money by you.' 'They could not for any sum,' answered I, 'give me the lessons I receive from you: for, if like my father, they must be *gentlemen* and *honourable men.*' His rage was exhausted by the usual epithets, I was 'an insolent puppy, a stubborn dog,' and my pride was that of beggary. I may have merited some of this censure; for certain it is that not even my mother could prevail upon me to bend to my supercilious uncle, or to pay my court to Miss Lucretia, even when she relaxed into good humour. I carefully shunned her, and was silent in

her presence. My father's unhappy malady quickened my sensibility, and gave poignancy to the reflections which were forced upon me. Flamall's tone of authority cut me to the soul; and his want of tenderness to my wretched mother, produced in my mind a rooted aversion to this man, which I can neither conquer, nor do I wish to conquer it. 'Oh Miss Cowley!" continued he, "it is impossible for me to say what my mother's sufferings have been! Unsupported, she watched over her husband with unremitting care, patience, and love! She has been his saving angel! And when disease and despair triumphed over their victim, her soothings and her faithfulness, were the healing balm that lulled him to repose.

"One day, shortly after Philip's removal to the university at Edinburgh, whither he was sent to finish his studies,

I found my mother in the garden in a agony of tears; and on my urging her t tell me what had so affected her, sh informed me, that Mr. Flamall had be talking to her of the *absolute necessi* of placing my father in a private mad house near Durham; insisting upon t that her indulgence was pernicious an would render him incurable. 'I hav told Lucretia,' added she, 'that I wis to be any where, rather than be a burde to her, or further exposed to my brother' unfeeling advice in a business with which he has nothing to do. She has gene rously resented this conduct of your uncle's, and they have had a very serious quarrel; but it will be settled, as most are, at my expence!'—'But is there no place of refuge for us,' asked I with re sentment, 'but a mad-house? Even *that* or a gaol would be a paradise to me could we call our cell our own. Let us leave this house; my industry'——She

prevented my proceeding, by saying with solemnity, '*I cannot, Malcolm!*' Miss Flint is not weary of me; and she only can break the chains that keep me under this roof. Your father has comforts here. She wishes him to have an asylum in her house. You know not this woman; I do: and I know also, that my brother is jealous of her affection for me. To this meanness, I attribute the barbarity of his advice this morning, and the inhumanity with which he urged me to remove the '*manaic*' where he would be *properly treated.*' Miss Flint's appearance with Mr. Flamall, still more disconcerted me. She asked me what was the matter, and whether my mother was ill. 'I understand, Madam,' answered I, 'that Mr. Flamall's project had been communicated to you, as well as it is now to me. But,' added I, fixing my indignant eyes on the stately gentleman, 'my mother will soon be better: I have

convinced her, that a more equitable judgment and skill than any *here*, must pronounce my father a lunatic, before even his *wife* has the right of confining him to a mad-house. Sir Murdock Maclairn needs neither a cell nor the strait waistcoat.' My uncle aimed a blow at my head with a stout cudgel he had in his hand, by way of reply to my observation; and the first and only favour I have to acknowledge to Miss Flint, was probably, saving me from a fractured skull, for the weapon was heavy and knobbed. She not only warded off the stroke, but with amazing strength held his arms. I smiled with contempt at his fury. 'Your mode of attack,' said I with cool scorn, 'is consistent with yourself; but remember I *am Maclairn's son* for the future, and that I am not enfeebled by sickness, nor mad. I fear you not; for I despise you.' My poor mother franticly implored me to retire: I was deaf to her intreaties. Miss Flint's

oric and amazonian power prevailed. dragged Mr. Flamall from the spot, ning with rage, and bestowing his edictions, instead of his cudgel, on head. From that hour we never ex- nged a word, beyond the few which e necessary at our meals.

I have reason to believe that Miss Flint this occasion was not displeased with ' stubborn dog.' It is certain, that behaved to me with more civility a ordinary for some time after this of of my obstinacy: the mad-house never mentioned from that period. It may not be improper to account to , Miss Cowley, for the resentment lt on the mere proposal of this mea- e. I did not think my father's intel- ts in a state that required such treat- nt. I knew that his malady had ori- nated from a dreadful illness, brought by a sudden stroke of adversity when was a young man; to this, was to be

attributed a peculiarity in his gener
habits of life, and a tincture of sadne
which shaded his character, and repres
ed his activity. But during his lon
confinement he constantly knew m
and his wife; and was apparently eas
and even tranquil, when we were by hi
side, though terror and alarm followe
on every intrusion by others; and a
unusual noise, or step, produced silenc
and dejection on him for hours; nay
sometimes days. At other times, we had th
cheering consolations of hope to suppo
us. He would examine my little dra
ings, sketch with a pencil a more co
rect outline, check me when playing o
of time on my flute, and beat the me
sure with his hand. When reading
my mother, he would listen, and ob
serve, 'I remember something of th
passage, read it again.' I did so, a
although I perceived the fleeting ima
had disappeared, yet it confirmed me
my hopes that time would restore n

father. Under this conviction you may judge that I was not disposed to listen with patience to the opinion and brotherly counsel of Flamall, who had by a thousand indications, shewn me that my father's fate was perfectly indifferent to him.

"Engaged in my duty to my parents, and considering from day to day, that young as I was, my mother had no protector but myself, I refused to accept of her proposal of going to the free-school at Durham. She was vexed by my resistance; and in the fulness of my heart, I mentioned my difficulty to Captain Flint. He had been very useful to me, from the first of my intimacy with Henry Heartley, whom he educated: but from this time, he wrote to my mother, and undertook my defence, engaging to be my preceptor. If I have not profited by his talents, it is my own fault; but I have gained from him one lesson, and

that will carry me through life I trust, without disgracing my Maker, or my best friend on earth.

"My brother's recall from Edinburgh was, in the course of events, the next occurrence of importance to me. This summons was in consequence of Mr. Oliver Flint's earnest wish to see his young brother. Death had bereaved him of his two last surviving children, boys nearly of Philip's age; and to this invitation to my brother, were added promises of receiving him as his heir. Mr. Flimall's opinion had weight with my mother, for it included his resolution of going with his nephew to Jamaica, the better to understand, and to secure to him the advantages held out. Miss Flint calculated her brother Oliver's age and fortune, and recalled to her memory the extensive and beautiful plantation on which she had first seen the light. Avarice combated with fondness; and she

yielded, trusting to Mr. Flamall's care, and the declining state of health of this poor afflicted father, for her idol's return to England. Philip arrived at Tarefield from the university; I had not seen him for a year and a half; and I was struck by the improvement of his person. 'He was always handsome,' added Malcolm smiling; 'but the Adonis had given place to more masculine comeliness; and his deportment was become serious, and rather reserved. We had mutually attained to those years which precluded rudeness, and I was treated as a gentleman, and I hope I shewed him that I was one; yet I saw Philip's advances to more familiarity like 'a stubborn dog,' for my heart receded from his *civilities*.

"One morning I met my brother in the avenue, in my way from the Abbey. He appeared to be lost in thought, and I fancied he was weeping. On perceiving me, he assumed a gay air, and asked me

where I had been rambling. 'I have been no where,' answered I, 'but with my friends at Wilson's.'—'Am I never, Malcolm,' said he with emotion, 'to have the comfort of finding my name in that list? Shall I never hear the voice of affection from a brother whom I love, and who is only unjust to me? Let me at least,' added he, offering me his hand, 'have this consolation before I leave England. I need it!' I did not refuse it, Madam, but my heart smote me; for I received his offered love ungraciously. 'I see,' said he, his fine face glowing, and his voice trembling, 'that I have no brother! Malcolm Maclairn is lost to me!' He turned away abruptly, whilst conscience-struck, I cursed those whose folly and injustiee had rendered me callous to the pleadings of nature. I was ashamed of my conduct; and lest I should afflict my mother, forbore to mention this incident. From that hour

I shunned Philip's eyes; for I felt his superiority of temper a reproach; and his increasing sadness became an intolerable weight on my spirits. Miss Flint's dejection at this time appeared to have changed her nature; my mother's firmness seemed to have the direction of her will; and her fondness for 'Harriot' rose in proportion as the hour approached, when she was to lose sight of her Philip. On the morning of Philip's departure, I and my mother breakfasted with him, at a very early hour, in Miss Flint's apartment. Mr. Flamall vainly tried to render the repast cheerful. The servant announced that all was in readiness. Philip rose with extreme agitation. 'One embrace,' said he, 'extending his arms and turning towards me, 'one embrace, Malcolm! It may be a brother's last request! Let me depart with the hope that if we do meet again, affection will welcome me!' I was sub-

dued! penetrated to the very soul! I burst into tears, and convulsed by my feelings, could only say, 'My brother! and my friend!' He pressed me to his bosom with energy. 'We are united!' cried I; 'no distance or time shall separate us! on earth or in heaven we will be brothers!' Mr. Flamall remarked, that I had ill chosen my time for pathetics, and gravely reminded Philip to behave like a man; but his lessons were useless; for our attention was now called to Miss Flint, who was in hysterics, and my weeping but collected mother urged her son to depart. I have somehow or other slid into a narrative, and I may as well finish my story," continued Malcolm. "I found that Philip had left me his fine hunter for a '*keep-sake*,' according to his groom's report. George, for obvious reasons, delivered his commission before Miss Flint, adding, that his master had refused an hundred guineas

from Squire Forster; because he thought I should like to ride a horse of his. 'Tis like my noble boy!' exclaimed Miss Flint. She paused, and after a struggle with her feelings, said with some bitterness, 'time must shew, how this brother's gift is received.' My heart prompted the reply; but my mother was present. Freed from Mr. Flamall's influence, and determined not to invade on the tranquillity which succeeded his absence, I settled into reserve and civility with Miss Lucretia Flint; and perhaps her dislike of me might have settled into mere indifference; but my sin was ever before her; for I persisted in loving my friends at the Abbey: and in due time she was informed, 'that I courted Miss Heartley.' My mother, who well knew my attachment to Alice, behaved with firmness on this occasion, as she had always done in my behalf. She instantly gave her *sister*, as she calls her *tormentor*, to

understand, that a son who had devoted his whole life to his duty as a child, and who was perfectly competent to judge of his own situation in the world, should meet with no controul, beyond that which his own prudence and regard to his parents enforced. "So," added Malcolm, smiling, "I still go a courting, in spite of Miss Lucretia. But this late disturbance had roused my angry passions; and I was serious with my mother. Last night I told her with frankness, that I would carry a musket for my bread, rather than live in an abode in which my father's peace was interrupted, and in which she was a passive slave.—"And what was her answer?" asked I. "Tears," replied he, "*tears*, which when I behold, unman me, and which I reproach myself for having caused.' She says, Miss Flint upbraids herself more than I can do; that she is miserable; and sums up all, by imploring me to have patience,

and to spare her on the only subject in which she must contradict and oppose me. 'You will, I trust,' added she, 'soon have a home of your own: so do I fervently hope *I* shall; but when I quit this house, Malcolm, it will be for the shelter of my grave.' I was so struck by her manner, that I am determined to press her no farther on the subject, if I can help it. In the mean time, I sometimes think, that my dear mother is secretly governed in this abject submission, from her wish to promote my union with Alice: it may be, Miss Flint has promised her to advance a sum of money for my establishment. Yet, my dear Miss Cowley, never did there exist a more noble and disinterested woman, than Lady Maclairn! and she well knows that both Miss Heartley and myself would reject Miss Flint's favours with scorn. We have comforts which she cannot invade, nor could we relish any

which she could purchase for us. We see each other without restraint, and by a reciprocal confidence, and solid affection, we mutually soften the delay, which prudence exacts, of a union in which we shall be more completely happy.

Malcolm had touched a chord in my bosom. "You are to be envied," said I with eagerness. "How many are there, with your honour and fidelity, who have not your consolations! Alice is a happy creature to some I could name." He pressed my arm to his breast. "Neither Miss Heartley, nor her Malcolm deserves to be happy," said he, "if they could be so, knowing you otherwise." I blushed: "I know your difficulties," added he, "if I be condemned for hating with a perfect hatred, I must look to you for my excuses. But I have omitted to tell you, that I wrote to Philip before he embarked; and received from him a

l letter. To one I wrote him after his
/al in Jamaica, I have had no an-
. Mr. Flamall is at the bottom of
mischief; and trusting to this con-
ire, I wrote again to my brother,
by this means gave Mr. Flamall a
evidence of being still incorrigible in
ect to my duty as *his nephew*. But,
dear Miss Cowley, the reign of *a*
nall is short; we shall see him in a
r different point of view, before he
s the stage, or I am much deceived."
And I shall be much disappointed,"
I with emotion; "and what is more,
Maclairn, it shall not be my fault
ıe does not repent." The girls now
:eiving us, advanced to meet us; and
lcolm forgot his dear uncle.
What will you say of a mother so
ıved, and so extolled as Lady Mac-
ı? She is still an enigma to me. I
convinced that Miss Flint can have
ınfluence, but what is supported by

fear: and wherefore should Lady Maclairn fear her? That is the question. It is *now* that Lucy Hardcastle is tenderly beloved without fear, by her

RACHEL COWLE

CHAP II.

LETTER XIV.

From the same to the same.

YOU were very good in your last letter, my dear girl, and I thank you; although with the *heart-burn.* Is it not hard that I must hear my brother is well, &c. &c. by a breach of duty on your part? And would it not be barbarous if you could keep to the letter of your father's harsh law? He, above all men, ought to know that offences are multiplied by the severities of penal statutes. I have heard him say this many times; therefore Mr. Hardcastle is an incousistent man. Tell him so for me, and add,

if you will, that Rachel Cowley is still Rachel Cowley, and will, in spite of his scruples, be his child. But I see this will not do. There! I have taken up another pen.

The captain, after our first greetings, the other morning, drew me aside, and with some solemnity thanked me for the "generous" concern I had shewn in favour of his niece. "I feel," added he, that my honour demands its acquittal from you: and till you know my motives for resigning up an orphan committed to my care, to the authority and direction of *Miss Flint*, I am certain you must blame me. I am however unequal to the recital of events, which ought to have forewarned me, that hatred and envy were incurable. My error arose from my ignorance of their unbridled power over minds in which they have once taken up their abode. Heaven be praised! my poor girl is once more in

my protecting, though feeble arms; and when I quit her, she will find her Maker still her friend."—"You may safely rest in that hope," answered I, with seriousness; "for already hath he appointed an agent for the purposes of his fatherly goodness: and when I forsake this young and innocent heing, may his bounteous hand direct my abundance into a different, and more worthy channel! I want a sister," said I smiling "and you must give me one!" He bowed, and without replying hastily retired.

Mary, with her muslin wrappers, and still languid complexion, never appeared more amiable: she assumed however more gaiety than she felt; for I saw with satisfaction, that she was anxious about her uncle. "I will shew you my little chamber," said she in a caressing tone; "will you go?" I followed her, and seating myself on her little white dimity bed, observed that half a breadth of her aunt's

cross-stitch carpet would cover her room. "It is this poor miserable aunt, I want to speak about," returned she; "I cannot forgive myself for having occasioned so much confusion and trouble. My dear uncle is so angry and vexed!"—"That will go off," returned I; "and as for your aunt, leave her to herself: you have done with her, and I am too angry to talk about her. What a neat room you have here!"—"Yet I could not sleep in it these last nights," said she sighing.—"Was there not a little self-reproach under your pillow?" asked I. "Did you not reflect, that, by concealing so long your aunt's conduct, you had been imposing on your uncle; and were striking at the root of his comforts, by endangering your health."—"What could I do, my dear Miss Cowley?" replied she in a deprecating tone. "I was no stranger to my uncle's narrow income. How could I be easy, whilst sharing with him comforts,

barely sufficient for himself! I was unfortunately not fitted for labour, and too young to encounter the world without friends, in any situation. I thought I had reasonable claims on my aunt; and how was it possible for me to conceive that she would be unkind to me, because she had been cruel to my parents?" Her tears flowed unrestrainedly. "When she proposed taking me," continued the artless girl, "and said, I should no longer be a burden on my uncle, I felt I loved her; and as she had no longer Mr. Philip to comfort her in her solitude, I hoped to render myself both useful and agreeable to her. I was disappointed; but my lot was not harder than that of thousands: and although Miss Flint's temper was harsh, and her behaviour discouraging, I met with kindness from all besides, and was sheltered from evil. Was I not right to submit, and keep my secret? I knew that if I had dropped a

word to Alice, I should have returned hither; and then my uncle would have had me on his hands again, and his difficulties would have been renewed: so I own, I always made the best of every thing, and parried as well as I could Mr. Malcolm's accounts, which often grieved Mrs. Heartley and Alice. My unlucky fainting fit has spoiled all! and what is worse, again separated Miss Flint from my uncle's favour! He says," whispered she, "that he cannot forgive her: and this grieves me to the heart; for my dear mother did forgive her; and I long to tell my aunt that her brother will forget this offence."—"What could urge her to such an outrage?" asked I. "You remember no doubt," replied she, "Mr. Snughead's passing us, and stopping to speak to you, the evening we returned from the Abbey. I was leaning on Mr. Wilson's arm, some paces behind you; and Malcolm and Alice

were loitering still farther, I believe, behind us. Mr. Snughead slackened his pace and accosted Mr. Wilson, by saying, 'If you be not as happy as the turtles I have passed, you seem *more gay*, Mr. Wilson;' and he fixed his eyes with curiosity on me. 'A man must needs have a bad conscience indeed!' replied Mr. Wilson, with good-humour, "if in so fine a night as this, and with such a companion as I have, he were not gay.' —'You say right!' answered Mr. Snughead, still looking at me; "you say *right*,' repeated he, 'quite *right*,' laughing loud, and winking his eyes strangely at me; 'such a companion would make any night a *fine night*, without the aid of the moon!'—'That is a text, Mr. Parson," answered Mr. Wilson, angrily, 'that suits *you* better than your hearers. I wish you safe home.'—'You are *witty* as well as *gay*, I perceive,' replied Mr. Sunghead. 'I hope, Miss Howard, you

will improve and retain Mr. Wilson's *bons mots*.'—'I beg your pardon, Sir," said I, trembling, 'indeed I do not know what you mean.'—'Pretty innocent!' replied he, with another loud laugh; 'but you are in good hands, there is a time for all things!' So saying he spurred his horse forwards. I was alarmed, and told Mr. Wilson I feared he had displeased Mr. Snughead. He said he had got no more than he deserved; that he was a dirty rascal; and he believed he was then tipsy. Well, my dread of meeting my aunt put all this out of my head! You know, my dear Miss Cowley, how fortunately that business finished. My patience on Monday conquered my aunt's sullenness. On the Tuesday morning Mr. Snughead came to visit her. He staid a long time; and I, well knowing how he hates Mr. Wilson, became uneasy. At length my aunt entered my chamber, which is, as you know, over her's; and

with a fury that made me tremble, she banged the door with such violence as to make that tremble also. 'A fine tale have I heard, my dainty minx!' exclaimed she; 'you can laugh and hoyden with the best of them, I find, with your own *set!* You can smile when a gentleman and a *clergyman* is insulted by your bully!'—'Good Heavens! my dear aunt,' said I, 'what do you mean? Surely'——'What! the pretty *innocent* has forgotten Mr. Wilson's '*bons mots!*' replied she, with provoking scorn.—'No, Madam,' answered I, 'I have not forgotten what he said, nor the speech which occasioned his resentment. He conceived, I presume, that it did not become a clergyman; and, to speak the truth, I was of his opinion; yet I was vexed at Mr. Wilson's answer, because I thought Mr. Snughead looked as if he had been dining in company.'—'Insolence!' exclaimed she, 'Mr. Snughead

was neither tipsy nor blind. He heard your fine speech.'—She advanced.—'I will teach you to defame your betters. I will teach you to make me the subject of your conversation and mirth with your *Wilsons* and their *crew!*'—'Good God!' cried I, still more terrified, 'is it possible that Mr. Snughead should have thus accused me! He dares not assert it to my face. I never named you, Madam, nor heard you named, but with respect; and that was by my uncle when in the avenue speaking to Jonathan.'—'You are a liar,' said she, with encreasing rage, 'Mr. Snughead heard that impudent upstart name me to you, and the laugh which his ribaldry excited from you, hussy, at the name of '*the chaste Lucretia!*' 'Indeed, my dear aunt,' answered I, 'Mr. Snughead has cruelly and erroniously repeated the word; for it was I, who was talking of the moon, and I remember to have said she was called the

ite *Luna* and Cynthia by the poets.'
And you did not laugh I suppose?'
she, with sternness.—'Certainly I
laughing,' replied I, 'when Mr.
ghead came up to us: but surely, that
not a crime? I neither laughed at,
indeed, clearly understood what had
leased Mr. Wilson, who only gave me
nagine that he thought Mr. Snughead
drank more wine than was useful
im.'—'It is false,' said she, striking
face, 'and I will teach you to un-
tand your champion's insolent reply.
Snughead saw you smile.'—'He
s not say so before me,' cried I,
ggling, for she grasped my throat so
l that she hurt me.—'What! you
ify yourself?' said she.—'Yes,' an-
ed I boldly; 'I never told a lie in my
I scorn it.'—'Do you so, my
ty Miss!' answered she, applying a
-whip to my face and bosom; this
l teach you to *fear* even contradict-

ing me.' I defended myself by hiding my face with my gown, and she struck me on the back part of my head with the handle of the whip. I sprung from her; and, losing my respect in the sense of my danger, I asked her whether she meant to murder me. 'Is it thus,' cried I, losing my temper, 'that Howard's daughter ought to be treated? Is it thus your sister's child ought to be used?' She followed me about the room like a fury, whilst I screamed with terror. Warner, who was in her lady's chamber, flew up stairs, and on seeing her I fainted. When I came to my senses I found I was on my bed, and Lady Maclairn, pale as a ghost, weeping by me. She was more hurt than I was: she wished herself dead, and was so distressed that I tried to comfort her. Warner nursed me as if I had been her child; and, because she thought me feverish, she sat up with me. I was dreadfully frightened, to say the truth,

could not close my eyes without see-
my aunt with the whip in her hand.
:y gave me nothing but water-gruel
three days, but their kindness and
npassion sweetened it. I shall never
ɡet Lady Maclairn's goodness! She
l me that my sufferings were light,
:n compared to hers; for that my
pes would be soon forgotten,—*but her*
rows were without remedy. She then
ed me whether, *for her sake,* I could
give my aunt. 'She is unhappy,'
l my lady. 'She is sensible of her
lt.' I said that was enough, and I
ıld pity her. So my aunt came to see
, and she begged my pardon. I was
ved by this unexpected concession;
: I answered that I was determined,
her honour, as much as my own safe-
to leave her, and seek my bread else-
ere. She *implored me,* Miss Cowley,
conceal her '*disgrace,*' (I use her own
rds) and promised that in future I

should have no cause to complain of her want of kindness. 'My mother,' said I, 'gave with her dying breath an injunction to those about her to teach me to *forget injuries;* I am her child, and you may, at your pleasure, make me yours. Treat me with kindness and I must be grateful, for I am a *Howard;* and rest assured that my uncle shall never know how unworthily I have been treated.' She seemed surprised at my spirit; I saw, Miss Cowley, that she was so; and I told her plainly that I was not made for her spaniel. 'You may, Madam,' said I, 'wonder at this language from one who, hitherto, has not dared to assert her claims to your protection. These have never had a view beyond the shelter my youth made necessary. Give me time and instructions, and turn me out on the world; my principles will then secure me, and my industry shall provide for me.' She wept, and all was made up.

Nothing could be more kind than she was. Now only think of the mischief my unlucky fainting has produced, and pity me!"

No language, my Lucy, which I could have employed, would so powerfully have roused you to indignation, as that I have used; and if you can command your feelings, whilst reading the account of this poor girl's sufferings, I must conclude, that the only means of awakening your torpid powers, will be to send the artless narrator to you. When you behold her feminine weakness, listen to her sweet voice, and view her pleading innocence of aspect, you will acquit Rachel Cowley of being vindictive. Till this time arrives, I shall hate Miss Flint with all possible cordiality. I was not in the humour to say any thing in the pathetic style; poor Mary's tears of "gratitude," as she called them, having excited mine, it became necessary to change my tone. "Methinks,"

observed I, "that my young sister looks somewhat shabby this morning; have they not sent you your cloaths?"—"Oh yes" replied she, "Mrs Warner took care of that business." "It was not a fatiguing one, I presume," said I; "a sheet of brown paper I suppose contained your wardrobe." She laughed. "Not altogether," said she; "though to say the truth, it did not fill a waggon."—"It is no matter," answered I, "we have done, Mary, with the *rags of unfeeling tyranny;* you are now mine, and must appear like mine." She again clung to my bosom, and I heard her say softly, "May this reach Heaven! and my mother!"

On joining Mrs. Heartley with our swollen eyes, I began at once on business. She entered with alacrity into my measures; and has engaged to provide us with the needful from Durham. "That bonnet of yours has seen service," said she laughing, and turning to Mary. "So

Lady Maclairn thought," answered she, "and she wished to have given me a new one before Miss Cowley came to Tarefield; but my aunt would not permit her, she said it was not necessary."—"She judged right," said I, with malice in my heart. "She well understood your better claims to favour. But what trimmings will you have for your bonnet?" "Oh lilac!" said she, eagerly. Alice smiled, "Now that is so like you, Alice!" observed the sweet girl: "have you not repeatedly said, that it was my colour as well as *Henry's?* Mrs. Heartley, and even my uncle, think it becomes me." This *naïveté* was not lost: I gave my vote for lilac ribbands; and taking leave, told Mrs. Heartley I would send a list of such articles of dress as were immediately to be sent.

We go on at the hall composedly, notwithstanding the *bruised knee.* Mrs. Allen's charity led her to Miss Flint's

room yesterday: she tells me she suffers much pain. You will not expect from me more than *admiration* of Mrs. Allen's virtue: she bids me tell you, your hearth rugs will be soon finished, and that Rachel Cowley is still her comfort; so love her, Lucy, as tenderly as you can love. Leave hatred to me, it demands a stronger constitution than yours. Heaven bless my Lucy!

RACHEL COWLEY.

CHAP. III.

LETTER XV.

From the same to the same.

"NOTHING new from Horace." Why, my dear Lucy, what could put it into your head that I wanted novelties from him? I only ask for his thrice, and thrice told tale of faith and love. I only want to know that he is cheerful and well. Did his last epistle resemble the letter which Mrs. Platman gave by mistake to her forty scholars to copy, and which had been composed on the subject of death, for the special purpose of supplying one of the girls with suitable language on the death of her grandfather, a man of ninety? But I am petulant, forgive me, Lucy. The

incessant rain without, and the dearth of amusement within, had led me to hope you would have sympathetically felt that I wanted a cordial. I am disappointed and I have yet to learn where to find your grand and infallible nostrum, *patience*: nay, what is more, I am disposed to think at this moment, that it resembles many other quack medicines, and promises more than it can perform. All constitutions are not alike, and I believe this specific, would do me more harm than good, from the *quantity* I should be forced to take in the experiment: so you must be contented with me, and recollect, that a fire may burn cheerfully and usefully, although from time to time a coal bounces out, and startles you; you have only to move from the annoyance a moment, the transient danger passes, and you may return again in safety to the snug warm corner you had left. I was much disposed last Sunday

to say with Miss Trotter, "that fifty fair-weather Sundays were scarcely an equivalent for two rainy ones." Ours was dreary: the poor baronet was out of spirit, and remarked twice at dinner, that we did not need so large a table for *four* people. He might have added, nor half the dishes for *three*, for he ate nothing. My harp and Handel's music, did something, but I could not sing hymns and psalms forever. We therefore each took up a book. Lady Maclairn soon after entered from her visit to her sister. "How is Miss Flint?" asked Mrs. Allen, raising her meek eyes from her bible. "Much better," answered her ladyship, in a low key. "She would have dined below today, but she was afraid of catching cold." "I should hope that *shame* had its share in this discretion," said Sir Murdock with vivacity.—"I am certain it had," replied she, with mildness, "and not only shame, but repentance."—There is no resisting

this woman, Lucy! In saying these few words, she disarmed me, and I refrained from saying what would have hurt her, and done the offender no good. But, for the hundreth time, I will not say she is *undefinable!* no, but she is *unfathomable!* After tea, she surprised me by her unwonted gaiety and spirit in conversation; she drew me into arguments and debates with an address nearly equal to your father's, and, between ourselves, seemed to have his art of angling to perfection; for when she found the poor fish flouncing with fatigue, she gently set it free, and restored it to the clear stream. Malcolm, like a dutiful son, was with us at supper; and a dessert of politics, and about manuring sterile land, sent us to bed cheerful, if not gay.

I passed yesterday at the Abbey. Our commissions were arrived from Durham; and no one was permitted "to see the fashions" till Miss Cowley arrived. She had

taken the whim of decorating two puppets, instead of one; and she was paid cent. per cent. for her money. The same robes, the same bonnets, cloaks, sashes, shoes, &c. "And so elegant!" exclaimed Mary. "How kind! how considerate is our sister!"—"Not exactly so," replied I, "for I forgot to consult Miss Heartley's taste in regard to the ribbands for her hat, and her milliner has sent blue; but as she is herself *the emblem of* constancy, she may prefer your favourite colour, Mary: and in that case, what is to be done? You must wear the *true blue*." "Just as she pleases," cried she from the looking glass, before which she was fitting her lawful prize; "only I doubt, whether Mr. Malcolm will not prefer the *true blue*, and I can do without it." The gratified uncle smiled on her, and said, "I believe you, my love." Alice preferred her own colour, and each disappeared with their fashions and finery.

I have engaged to meet Mary's friends on Sunday; Mr. Greenwood, her godfather, and a doctor Douglas, who annually celebrate her birth-day at Mrs. Wilson's table. She will be seventeen on that day. On my leaving her, she fondly kissed my cheek, and whispered, "Does my sister wish me to be dressed on Sunday like her happy *protégée?*"—"Always as *my sister* ought to appear," answered I, with emotion: "and as she will be enabled to appear; for the rest, she is to direct her own toilet." "Then I think on my birth-day, it will be proper to wear"——"the lilac," cried I gaily, retreating, having exceeded my promised hour of returning home.

On reaching the hall, I instantly entered the dining-parlour, in order to make my peace with my friends; but instead of them, I found Miss Flint and the Reverend Mr. Snughead *tête-à-tête.* I slightly curtseyed, and said I was glad to

ee her below stairs; and was retiring with ll possible speed, when Sir Murdock, with is wife and Mrs. Allen, entered from my partment. The "truant" was welcomed; nd supper served up immediately. Malolm, with head erect, and glowing face, oined us; and our repast was coldly and eremoniously finished. The servants ere no sooner withdrawn, than Mr. Snughead pressed Miss Lucretia to drink a lass of Mountain wine. "He was afraid he lived too low."—"He was sorry to ee her so out of spirits." The restrained ears gushed from her eyes. Yes, Lucy, *enuine salt tears* came from the eyes of his *Flint!* The miracle I can attest; nd you may believe it with the same faith hich you give to Moses's striking the rock, nd causing the water to flow. I am the eriest fool in nature; for I found, like he obdurate Jews, that my heart softened: nd indeed, what must have been the con-

flict within, before these signs of grace could appear?

"I am astonished," observed Mr. Snughead, looking round him with an air which he thought dignified, and which I pronounced insolent, "I am grieved, my dear Madam, to see you give so much importance to a circumstance of so little consequence to your character and station! I always foresaw what would be the result of your generosity in interfering in Miss Howard's concerns: all your *real* friends were of my opinion." —He looked at Lady Maclairn.—"I know you are quick in feeling, and warm in your temper, and that on perceiving your goodness slighted, you must be unhappy."—Malcolm left the room. "Pursue your good intentions," continued he, "allow this niece a trifle for her support, and leave her to those friends whom she so unhappily prefers to your protection and prudence. She has been taught to

hate you from her cradle."—"I know it, I know it well!" said she sobbing; "but I am sorry I struck her; it was wrong; and although she provoked me, I ought not to have done so. Indeed, Miss Cowley, if you knew all, you would pity, as well as blame me. But I see how it is; my forgetfulness of myself has confirmed in your mind all that my enemies have said to my prejudice. Mary has her revenge, and the Heartleys their triumph!"—"I am sorry, Madam," said I, "to be called upon in a question of this kind; but qualified as I am to support the innocent, it behoves me to endeavour at least to rectify your opinions. Miss Howard, whatever were her discontents under this roof, kept them from her friends at the Abbey. She never has directly, nor indirectly, discovered them to me since I have been here. She is at this hour more concerned by the discovery of your harsh treatment, than for the

loss of your favour. She speaks of you with respect, nay more, with tenderness and sorrow. She dwells with eagerness on the concessions which you generously made; and attributes your warmth of resentment, to your misconception of the supposed offence. Mrs. Heartley supports her, Madam, in this moderation, and labours to convince Mr. Flint that he has taken up this matter too painfully. Mary Howard cannot balance many favours with one offence. She is affectionate, placable, and unoffending; her heart is too pure for malice or ill-will; and her principles are too solid to permit her to slander you. To Mrs. Heartley's lessons and example she is principally indebted for these excellencies;—to nature, for a temper unrivalled in meekness." —"You appear," observed the puppy at my left hand, and on whom I had turned my back, "to be as able an advocate for Mrs. Heartley, as for Miss Howard. May

I *presume* to ask you, how long you have known this all-accomplished Lady, to whom Miss Mary is obliged for her sentiments of love and veneration for her aunt?"—"Mrs. Heartley wants no advocate," replied I, darting upon him my contemptuous eyes. "It is sufficient for me to know her; and were other evidences of the excellencies of her character necessary, I should find them in the solicitude of my guardian, Counsellor Steadman, to recommend me to her favour and notice. He has known *Mrs. Heartley* from a girl; and if you are still curious, Sir, in regard to a person whom you appear to wish to know, I refer you to *Mr. Steadman.* He will probably satisfy you, that Captain Flint has been *singularly fortunate in his amours;* and that Mrs. Heartley is a kept mistress of as *singular* a kind. Are you satisfied, Sir? or shall I give you any further indications of Mrs. Heartley's *singularities?*"

—"Oh, by all means!" cried he, affecting an aukward laugh; "you are an excellent encomiast."—"I can be no otherwise with such a subject for praise," retorted I; "but what I most admire in Mrs. Heartley's character, is her contempt of *malice*, and her compassion for *ignorance:* with me, this is the test, not only of her understanding, but of the purity of her life. With a steady hand, Lucy, I took my taper, and calmly wishing the company a good night, retired; the confounded Mr. Snughead, receiving my last look as he stood erect to let me pass. He observed, when I was departed, that for so *very young* a lady, I had a *very* decided spirit; "and to say the truth," added he, rising and turning to the baronet, "I am sorry I called out so much of Miss Cowley's warmth, on a subject of so little concern to me." Sir Murdock coldly bowed. "Miss Cowley must remember," continued he, "my

having declared that I knew nothing of Mrs. Heartley but from common report. I am surprised, that a lady of her quickness, could not see the *motives* for my conduct there, and also to night."—"So should I be," returned the baronet, "if she did not, for they were pretty obvious; and Miss Cowley is not often dull in her observations, nor slow in her conclusions. The servant announced the parson's horse, who recommending to Miss Flint to think no more of *such nonsense*, retreated.

I will spare you the trouble of writing me an essay on anger. I know all you would say on such a topic, but it would be out of season; for I was not angry, Lucy: I am *never* angry, but where I could like, and love, were it necessary. You must demonstrate some specific remedy for antipathies, before I can be benefited by the lecture you will be prompted to send me. Now, collect all

the antipathies in nature, and they will not amount to that which this reptile Mr. Snughead has produced in Rachel Cowley's mind. Perhaps I was too warm; but what is to be done with antipathies? I have no talent at a fainting fit; I cannot scream, and look terrified when I want only the strength of a man, in order to grasp a despicable foe. Nature, nature, my Lucy, is my divinity! to her do I owe my aversion of the Snugheads' race; and when they do fall in my way, what is to be done? I cannot crush them, as many do a poor harmless spider; but I would probe them to the quick, without flinching. Some vices I can pity, but a spirit of defamation is my abhorrence; and an unworthy minister of a religion to which I am attached, as my supreme good, is my antipathy. So I beg you will recollect yours to a toad, and pardon your

RACHEL COWLEY.

P. S. I admire Seneca; but what was his age when he turned philosopher? In the name of good sense I implore you to ask your father how long a term he gives to infancy. I am now an infant of twenty years and twelve days, and I am a better philosopher than Seneca. Is it not astonishing that your father does not yet know Rachel Cowley! I pray every day for him, and with patient hope, trust he will one day repent of his *cruelty*, and see with his own clear-sighted understanding, instead of the borrowed light of a squint-eyed worldly prudence.

LETTER XVI.

From the same to the same.

You cannot, I think, have forgotten, my dear Lucy, how often in the pride of my heart I have blessed nature for having compounded my character of better ma-

terials than those which our poet has inimitably given to a species of beings, who, in my opinion, only encumber the space allotted to mortals!

"Yet Cloe sure was form'd without a spot;
Nature in her then err'd not, but forgot;
With every pleasing, every prudent part,
Say, what does Cloe want? She wants a heart.
She speaks, behaves, and acts just as she ought,
But never, never reach'd one generous thought."

So much for those who *want* hearts. Now for those who have too much of this useful, but combustible commodity; and who, proudly relying on its impulses, drive on without knowing the course they steer, till they are surprised to find themselves ingulphed in the worst of all the deadly sins, which old Hannah, your cook, used to tell us St. Anthony quitted when he forsook the world for a cowl. I mean *spite* and *rancour* of spirit: and into this whirl-

pool have I, for some time, been speeding, at the instigation of my good friend, *a warm heart.* How truly may I apply Pope's lines to myself!

" Oft in the passions' wild rotation tost,
The spring of action to myself is lost."

But confession is the best road to repentence, according to Hannah's creed; and you will not be a worse confessor for the knowledge you have of your present penitent's abhorrence of hypocrisy.

On Saturday evening Miss Flint asked us whether we meant to attend divine service the following morning. Colds and rheumatic pains were pleaded by the ladies. Sir Murdock was out of the question, he still obstinately preferring his own prayers to Mr. Snughead's. I, nothing loth to enjoy the silly triumph of seeing her mortified, promised to accompany her, and my *conscience* slept as sound as *I* did. She looked surprised on

my joining her to go to church, to see me so smartly dressed; and I mentioned my engagement to dine at the Abbey, adding that I meant to walk from church with my friends; to which she civilly replied, that she could set me down, and that I should not discompose my dress by walking. We entered the church, passing the broad stare from the benches, and took our seats in the pew. Soon after entered the girls, in all the flutter of haste, and in their new attire. As they passed to their seat the woman all rose, as if by common consent, and curteseyed to Miss Howard with marked respect. The captain received this compliment with more surprise than gratitude, whilst Mary's cheeks were dyed with blushes. Her beautiful hair, in which, to be poetical, the autumnal breeze had sported more roughly than the zephyrs of the spring, had escaped from the little straw bonnet, and, in some disorder, shadowed off the

lilac-coloured ribands: the simplicity of her person, clad in her unsullied white robes, had however acquired a more elegant *tournure* by the fashion in which she was dressed. A lilac sash and shoes completed the general opinion of the curious spectators, and with one accord, they told "nurse Dobs," that Miss Howard was for once dressed *like "Mrs. Howard's daughter."* In passing our pew, she respectfully curtseyed to her aunt, and on entering Wilson's, kneeled down. Miss Flint would gladly have done the same, but she could not kneel; she removed herself to the pillow, where she was concealed, and wept bitterly. In the confession, her sobs were even audible; and in mine, Lucy, I recollected that "I had done that which I ought not to have done." I had with a cruel levity and inconsiderateness promised to my angry passions, a gratification, for which my conscience and feelings now reproved

me. During Mr. Snughead's discourse on the inefficacy of good works without faith, I was composing the lecture which such an instance of my obduracy of heart as the one that stared me in the face, would have called from our *christian mother*. Unable to reach the purity, and I had almost said the divine eloquence which flowed in her lessons, I endeavoured to recall her often repeated words: "You have, Rachel," would she say, "an erring, but a faithful admonitress in your bosom; you will never act wrong without feeling that you are deviating. Never, for an instant, resist the intimation your conscience will give you; the warmth of your temper requires all the vigilance of your moral guide; and Heaven, in its mercy, has so constituted you, that you cannot be unjust nor unmerciful, without feeling the pains you inflict, with an acuteness proportioned to those faculties with which you

are endowed for the purpose of rising to eminence in virtue. You may subvert the intentions of your Maker by an abuse of his gifts, but even in this life you will be miserable by so doing; for you will never be able to stifle the reproaches of a heart formed to have no gratifications, but in seeing the happiness of all around it. Who would reject such privileges, and turn from the sweet and satisfying pleasure of doing good to all within our reach, for the indulgencies of a petulant temper, and a stubborn self-will?"

The whole convocated clergy could not more effectually, nor more authoritatively, have preached to me, than did the recollection of this lesson, and *the occasion* which gave rise to it. My part was now chosen, and I whispered to Mrs. Heartley, on the service being concluded, that I could not be with her till the tea hour. On going down the aisle, the

poor and truly crest-fallen Miss Flint was obliged to proceed slowly; she is very lame. Amidst the half-whispered praises of the beautiful niece, who preceded her, she overheard one old woman say, "Aye, aye, she is like her parents, her's is not the beauty of a day; like them, she will be an angel in heaven!" Miss Flint looked distressed. "Lean on me, my dear Madam," said I aloud, and in an endearing tone, "do not hurry." She pressed my arm with emotion; and on reaching the carriage, wept so bitterly that I dreaded lest she should have an hysteric fit: her tears were, however, its preventive; and when somewhat more composed, she requested me to give the servant the order to stop at the Abbey. I answered, with the compassion she had excited, that I should not go; adding, "Let us extend our ride, the morning is favourable, and the air will be useful to you." I pulled the check-string; and

of our comfort," replied she, "and you may, if you please, warn them of the danger to which your partiality exposes them."—"You would act much more consistently," replied I gaily, "to warn them yourself; and by your influence with them, weaken mine. Why do you persist," added I, with earnestness, "in depriving yourself of a society so formed for you? Why will you refuse to visit those whom you esteem?"—"I cannot act otherwise, Miss Cowley," answered she, with seriousness; "I would visit them, were it possible for me so to do without infringing upon what I think a duty."—"You will pardon me," replied I, "for renewing a subject, on which you have before so decidedly given a negative, in consequence of the motive which at this time prompted me to recall it: this suggestion of my mind may also stand in need of an apology; but it will have one with you, in the goodness of my inten-

tions. I think that after what has passed, Sir Murdock ought to visit Captain Flint. He cannot otherwise renew his visits here; and every means should be employed to effect a reconciliation between him and his sister, who appears to me truly concerned for this recent breach between her and her brother: besides these inducements, for a compliment of this sort, I think Sir Murdock owes this advance to *himself* and *you*, as much as to Captain Flint. What can mark his and your disapprobation of the violence which has driven his niece and himself from the hall more strongly, than convincing him, that you mean not to drop his acquaintance, nor to avoid him, because he has been injured, and your roof abused?"—"Miss Cowley is in the right," said the baronet rising with spirit. "I have deferred too long to convince Mr. Flint that we have been fellow-sufferers with himself in the outrage com-

mitted in this family, and not the *aiders* and *abettors* of a cruelty which would be the disgrace of a workhouse. You can have no objection to my waiting on the captain for a purpose so indispensible to my honour," added he, with some warmth of manner and addressing his wife.—"Sir Murdock Maclairn needs not the guidance of any one," replied she with tenderness, "in this, or any other question; his own understanding and principles will always direct him to a conduct of propriety and justice. Were it not for this conviction, I would say, *go this very evening* with Miss Cowley, and convince Captain Flint, that your wife has not suffered less than his innocent Mary. He will say that Sir Murdock Maclairn is entitled to his respect and esteem." I verily believe, Lucy, that had not her husband strained her to his bosom, I should to mine, she looked at this moment so amiable in my eyes.

Malcolm flew to order the curricle; and conducted by the baronet, I set out. On the road some previous ceremony was adjusted; and on our arrival Sir Murdock entered the captain's apartment, I sending him from the drawing-room to entertain his visitor. They remained below some little time; when the disembarrassed and cheerful air with which they joined the party, relieved us. Mrs. Heartley overlooked, in her satisfaction, that it was the first time the baronet had been in her house; but with the most cordial frankness, she received him as an accustomed guest. She introduced to him Mr. Greenwood and Doctor Douglas, her visitors, and with the most courtly ease, Sir Murdock replied to her little compliments, that he perceived her protection would soon recommend him to the favour of his *neighbours*.

The night approached with a heavy fog, and in order to complete my humi-

liation, Miss Flint sent her coach "for Miss Cowley's return." Malcolm, whose hardness of heart still resists the hour of contrition, affirms that this compliment to my health and accommodation included Mr. Snughead's safety, who, profiting by the ordering of the carriage, had escaped an evil he dreads as much as his lady's death, namely, autumnal damps and the gout. I was not to be prevented; and finding her in the parlour, repaid her kindness with my fooleries, and made her laugh by a description of Doctor Douglas, with whose person and manners I was pleased, and with which I affected to be enamoured. The poor creature was amused; and your Rachel Cowley, somewhat at peace with herself, bids you farewell.

CHAP. IV.

LETTER XVII.

From the same to the same.

MY dear Lucy will need no apology for my sending by the usual method, little more than the inclosed Memoirs of the *Flint Family*, with which the captain favoured me last Friday. The perusal of the manuscript has very much chilled my christian charity for Miss Lucretia; but I strive against temptation, and try to say with Mrs. Allen, "Alas! my dear Miss Cowley, this unhappy being is entitled to commiseration! Can you wish her a more severe punishment than her

own wretched mind?" You, my Lucy, will not. But read and judge for yourself.

LETTER XVIII.

From Captain Percival Flint, to Miss Cowley.

SENSIBLE, my dear Madam, that in communicating to you the painful circumstances of my disastrous life, I should unavoidably renew those feelings, which it is both my duty and my interest to suppress, I take this method of placing before you the sorrows and disappointments which have eventually made Mary Howard an object for benevolence and pity. Your generous offers of protection to this amiable orphan, have been so enforced on my consideration, by the genuine language of truth and humani-

ty, that I should despise myself were I capable of doubting their sincerity; but Percival Flint cannot forget his own honour. Miss Cowley's connections must be convinced, that no advantage has been taken of her munificent spirit and feeling heart. It is requisite they should know, that, in the present object of her favour, there is both innocence and virtue as spotless as her own; and that in the poverty of her condition she may at all times find consolation and strength, by contemplating the worth of those who gave her life. You will therefore have the goodness to send the inclosed manuscript to your friends, and suffer them to regulate a generosity, unbounded as the source from whence it flows! My niece is indeed the child of Providence, and under every event I trust she will be worthy of its favour. To secure to her a friend like yourself, is my fervent pray-

er; but her claims must be established, before she can be the object of your care.

I remain, Madam,

Your obliged humble servant,

PERCIVAL FLINT.

MEMOIRS OF THE FLINT FAMILY.

MY father, Mr. Oliver Flint, by a diligent and persevering attention, and a constant residence on his estate in Jamaica, not only enlarged his property and increased his wealth, but also acquired so confirmed a predilection for the place in which his prosperity had been always flourishing, that he imagined the island of Jamaica to be the most healthy spot in the habitable globe; and it was a frequent topic of conversation with my mother,

to prove to her, that the air was salutary, and that no one died at Jamaica, whom intemperance did not conduct to the grave. My mother was sensible that her health had suffered in this "terrestrial paradise," and that it was hourly sinking into debility; but she left to her countenance the office of confuting my father's arguments, and suffered in silence. A very dangerous fever with which my father in his fiftieth year was attacked, in spite of his sobriety and precautions, effected a change in his opinions, and probably preserved to my mother some years of existence in this world. Jamaica was no longer conceived to be without the inconveniences of its tropical situation, and my father hastened his preparations to leave it.

Our family, at the period we embarked for England, consisted of my brother Oliver, my sister Lucretia, and myself, who was the youngest.

My mother, in her wish to return to England, had been governed by motives of advantage to her children, as powerfully as by a consideration for her own health. The uncontrouled indulgence which my father granted us, bounded his views; our improvement constituted no part of his cares; and the consequence was, that Oliver and Lucretia, to use his own words, had never been ill a day in their lives. I was born less robust, and was reared with more difficulty. My mother, in her tender cares, kept me in her sight, and my mind was formed to docility, and my sports to more quietness, than suited the vigorous Oliver, and the romp my sister. I thus became my mother's amusement; and to her taste I am indebted for my love of literature and science. Our voyage was pleasant, though tedious, Our accommodations were easy, for the vessel was my father's; and in the delights of the

deck, I lost, by my activity, the name of "*Miss Molly*," which my father, though with good humour, had taught my brother and sister to give me. My mother appeared to have left her complaints in "the wholesomest spot in the world;" she hourly became more cheerful; and my father confessed that the sea breeze was equal to the air of the plantation. We settled in London; and a time was given to repose and amusements; when, again my mother's cheek faded, and I took the alarm. Her maid-servant told me, as *a secret*, that we should soon have a nursery and a cradle to provide, and that her master was looking out for a country-house, in order that my mother might be quiet. This plan was effected; the family removed to a handsome, spacious house near Chelsea; and such was my father's solicitude for the quiet of his wife, that he placed Oliver, then thirteen, in a commercial academy in the

city; Lucretia in a boarding-school; and in conformity with the wishes of his wife, who was not to be contradicted, I was sent to the Charter-house.

My father, who loved children, and coveted them with as much avidity as he did money, received the promised blessing with transports of joy; and my sister Mary's birth was commemorated as the renewal of his own life. With fond delight he shewed the infant to his friends, and exultingly pointed out to them the promises of a face which was indeed, angelic! She did not disappoint these early presages. As she advanced in age, she exhibited a form and face which perfectly corresponded with a temper of unequalled sweetness; and with such graces, it was no wonder she was beloved even to adulation by my father, and the whole house.

An artist of some celebrity, and more skill, requested permission to take her

picture. She was then in her eighth year, and the painter succeeded so happily, that he gained credit by exhibiting his work, and induced my father to have a full-length portrait of my mother, with Mary. This picture was my father's pride; an engraving was made from it, and scores of prints were sent to Jamaica, in order to convince our friends there, that the elaborate praises they had heard of this paragon of nature, did not exceed her beauty.

This instance of my father's fond admiration of his child, and in which he was countenanced by all who knew her, would not have found a place here, but for the inferences I drew from it. I had long perceived that Lucretia did not partake with us in the partiality we manifested for the innocent and bewitching Mary. I had seen the envy with which she regarded every proof of kindness and favour shewn to her; the spiteful misre-

presentations which she gave of her disposition to strangers, and the contempt she discovered for the weakness of my father's adulation of his darling. During the time she was sitting for her picture the artist was become a favoured guest at our table; and, with apparent sincerity, he observed one day, that a Guido alone could do justice to Mary's style of beauty. I saw Lucretia colour with vexation; and that very afternoon I rescued the poor child from her correcting hands, to whom with some resentment I said, that I should inform my father and mother of her severity and violence. "Do so!" answered she, bursting into tears, "tell them that the *neglected, ugly* Lucretia gave the *beauty* a sound box on the ear, and a lesson that she needs. Tell them her baby face will be her ruin, but it shall never excuse her faults with me." The sweet and mild creature, with tears, protested that she did not know how she had

offended her, imploring her forgiveness and soliciting to be friends.

I believe my prudent mother had observed the discontents of her eldest daughter as soon as myself; and in order to preserve the peace of the family, she studied to give Lucretia a consequence in it which she judged might satisfy, at least, her love of power. On her leaving school, my mother treated her as a young woman on whom she depended for assistance in the domestic concerns of the family. Oliver and myself were ordered to treat her with deference, and the servants were taught to respect Miss Flint's orders as her own. She continually praised her good qualities, and treated her with the utmost kindness and confidence. But Lucretia exercised her authority rather too much like a despot; my brother and myself were not always passive subjects; and the servants murmured under the controul of the young house-keeper.

My father's tranquillity was thus invaded, and he determined on a measure, which, had it succeeded, would have restored order in his house. But Miss Flint was a plain girl; and my good father found that neither the frequent intimations which he gave of his liberal fortune, and designs in her favour, nor the commendations he bestowed on her *good sense* and *notability*, produced any overtures of a matrimonial kind for his daughter. Lucretia, estimating her fortune and pretensions, was too proud "to undervalue herself," and with manners never pleasing, she was overlooked by men whose fortune needed not trafficking for a wife. This period of her youth, of course, passed unpleasantly; and conscious that she was neither a favourite with her own sex nor the other, she disdained both, and acquired a severity of speech, and a pointed incivility of behaviour to all around her.

I had in the course of these events quitted my situation at the Charter-house. My partiality towards my sister Mary had not been unnoticed. Lucretia classed me with those whom she despised; and I met this indifference, it may be, with too much carelessness. In the mean time, my dear mother's influence was again exerted in my favour; but she gained her point with some difficulty. My father ungraciously observing, that he saw she was determined to have me learned and useless. He had no interest but such as his commercial concerns gave him; and he only wished, that I might not in the end blame her for an ambition so little profitable to my future fortune in life. My mother prevailed, and I was sent to Oxford. Satisfied with this extorted compliance, she saw me for two or three years happy in my pursuits, and the friend of my tutor; and wherefore, my dear Madam, should I

suppress the glory of my life? She saw me her pride and hope! Her discernment in chosing the moment propitious to her applications in my behalf, and her gentle arguments in my favour had their effect; they could not make my father generous; but they prevented him from being mean; and my oeconomy rendered his bounty sufficient.

At this period of my history, I received the melancholy summons to attend my mother, whose life was in danger. Too soon were these apprehensions verified! I will pass over a sorrow which your feeling heart has known, and which was the tribute that every child must pay to the loss of a good parent. My mother appeared to have settled her accounts with this world, but as they related to Mary, then nearly fourteen. She spoke of her approaching dissolution with calmness and the hopes of a christian. "I have," said she to me, "only one anxiety to

to banish from my mind, before I give myself up to my merciful maker. But the mother is yet too busy for my resignation. You Percival, are my hope; you see the partial hand of nature has endowed your sister Mary with a beauty, which all must acknowledge; I dread it, as her misfortune. You know her artless, unsuspecting natnre, the cheerful gaiety of her temper, and her soft, compliant disposition. Guard her, as you wish for a mother's blessing! Your father's pursuits in life, his excessive fondness for his dear girl, and, I may say it to you, his want of mental attainments, must disqualify him for the guide of her youthful career. Your brother will soon be so remote from her, that were he capable of protecting her, his situation will render him useless to her. Lucretia loves her not, and from the violence of her temper and the authority she will assume, every thing pernicious is to be feared. Watch

over her safety; establish her in those principles to which alone she can trust for her security. Strengthen her in her weakness, encourage her in her duty, and preserve her spotless for that abode, in which, I hope, we shall be reunited. Your education," continued she calmly, "and what is of infinitely more importance, your moral attainments, not only qualify you to supply my loss to this precious girl, but they will, I trust, secure to you that mediocrity of fortune and independence, I wish you. You are no stranger to your father's temper, and in his foibles you will find motives of gratitude to that providence which has afforded you the opportunity of correcting and enlarging your own views. I have of late," added she, deeply sighing, "found him more averse than usual to your expenditure at college. That wife who could convince him that his son was moderate and prudent, will be in her

grave. Take this pocket-book, it contains my little savings, and it has been destined for your exigencies for some years. The time may come, when, with a mother's blessing, and the Almighty's favour, it will comfort you; preserve it for an hour of difficulty;" continued she, pressing my hand with great emotion, "endeavour to please your father; he has, my dear Percival, many good qualities. Live, if it be possible, in peace with Lucretia; be prepared for her ascendency. She will grieve your father in many points. I have laboured in vain to correct her temper, but God, in his own time, will, I trust, create in her a new heart; and she may live to *befriend*, not to *annoy* her family. Till that happy change takes place, be on your guard, never provoke her to anger, nor defy her power; such a conduct will never reclaim her, and *will ruin you.* Remember *this* my dear son, and continue to press for-

ward in that course, which must, and will end well for those who faint not. The distance is short, and the recompence of virtue the prize; fear not the ruggedness of the path, nor be discouraged, because the wicked prosper."— But I am forgetting my purpose, Madam, in recalling the last words of my guardian angel!

My brother Oliver's voyage to Jamaica took place soon after my mother's death, and his marriage and final settlement in the island succeeded to these events. In the following year, my father purchased the estate of Tarefield, and giving up his business to my brother, and his old and faithful clerk, retired to the hall. His first sorrow for my mother's loss, was so violent as to give us fears for his life. His constitution was shaken by a fever of some danger and duration. On recovering from this peril, I could not help perceiving that the gloom which

hung on his spirits, was tending to that state of discontent which invariably precludes all the "uses of adversity." Accustomed to seek, in the cheerful and conciliating temper of my mother, a relief in all the little petulancy of his own unequal disposition, he lamented her loss without ceasing, as a *convenience*, rather than a blessing, which he had seen torn from him. Lucretia, with unremitting attention, endeavoured to regulate his domestic comforts. Mary alone possessed the power to calm and compose his fretful hours; she was indulged as a child, in return for her tender solicitude to amuse and please him. I was useful to him in no way, and sunk into a cypher.

My father, in his sorrow, had forgotten to lament the loss of that benign influence, which had so skilfully counteracted the encroachments of avarice. Left to his natural bias, these soon appeared, and Lucretia failed not to make an advantage

of a weakness which her mother had checked and restrained. Every reform in the expences of the family met with approbation, and my father insensibly gave his confidence "to his excellent manager." I silently submitted to the new order of things. The time approached for my emancipation from the restraints of my father's house; I had taken my degrees, and wished to pass one term more at the university, before I solicited my ordination. I spoke to my father on the subject, explaining to him my motives for the request I urged. "I have withdrawn your name from the college books," said he, "more than a week since. I see no good that can result from your losing your time, and spending my money there." I ventured to remonstrate, urged my disappointment, and added, that I had not been idle, but had worked both for honour and independence. "Pray, Sir," asked he with a

sneer, "how much did you expect to make yearly, of your *learned* labours?' "Even in deacon's orders," replied I, cut to the very soul, "I might have eaten my own bread, and gratified my love of *learning*."—"That you may do here," replied he roughly, "by being Mary's schoolmaster; and at my table, with forty pounds per annum, I presume you will be as well off as with a curacy." My mother's blessed spirit saved me from uttering the reproaches which were on my lips. I remembered her dying advice, I bowed, and was retiring. "Hark ye, Sir!" cried he, "I see I have offended your classical pride, but you ought to remember, that I never wished to see you brought up in idleness. It was your mother's pleasure to see you the *gentleman* of the family. I always told her, I would not buy you a *living*: earn one, as I have done before you. Go to your brother Oliver, and he will teach you a better

trade than that of a country curate. I will send you in the next ship, and then do something for you that will not be lost should you die: so you have time to consider of my offer, and to study your multiplication table into the bargain." I bowed, and said, that my part required no time for a resolution: I was not educated for commerce; nor should I go to Jamaica; but I should consider that time well employed, which was devoted to Mary's improvement: for the rest, I relied on his goodness and favour" "As you please," answered he, somewhat softened: "at least, you will be useful, and you will have no wants under my roof." I bowed, and was permitted to retire. Lucretia exulted in this my defeat; but I kept my temper. Mary with delight, now listened to my plans of instruction. Young as she was, she entered into my vexations. "Be but contented here," said she, "and I shall be happy. My father's

love is not yet diverted from his plaything; leave me to manage, you shall be comfortable." Every device which innocence and affection could suggest, was now practised in her playful hours with her doating father. She could not study in the common parlour, she should never think herself at school. My father ordered Mr. Percival to choose his own apartment; and a room was dignified with the name of my study. It were endless to enumerate the means this "spoiled child," to use Miss Flint's epithet, employed to lesson the mortifying circumstances of my situatiou. Her winning smiles, her sweet persuasions, her playful vivacity, had in appearance but one stimulus;—*my ease and comfort.* She rode on horseback, because this produced a horse for Percival's use, who was to attend her. She loved only what he preferred at table, and even in her application to my lessons, she was excited by the desire

of serving me. My father soon discovered by Mary's proficiency in arithmetic and writing, that her schoolmaster was not ignorant in the multiplication table; and I, satisfied with my dear pupil's improvement, and gratified by her affection, became more reconciled to my situation. Mary's age, when in her seventeenth year, produced her a new title. "The spoiled child" was dismissed for "the idle girl," and lectures on the loss of time were not spared. With serious remembrance of my mother's too prophetic words, I laboured incessantly to implant in my lovely sister those principles of conduct, which in female life, particularly, are of more worth than all the learning of the schools. The regulation of her heart, and the strengthening her judgment, neither deprived her of her native simplicity, nor diverted her attention from the occupations of her sex. She continued to be my father's

source of joy and comfort; and with a temper and an address, which it must be confessed, peculiarly marks the fair sex, and which, when employed as Heaven intended, renders a woman irresistible, she converted at her pleasure, the ungracious refusal into kindness, gloom into social content, and fretful complainings into laughter and delight. One triumph of this angel in form and mind, I cannot omit. She had by her innocent exertions to please her father, persuaded him, that at seventeen years of age, it was time for her to begin to economize her own little purse. "It is now three months since I was as old as my sister, when she had her regular allowance," added she, "and it would be the means of making me more careful and industrious, like Lucretia, had I the management of my clothes and expences. My dear mother used to say," continued she, changing her seat for my father's knee,

as though sensible that she could thus more successfully transpose into his bosom a portion of that benevolence which warmed her own, "that nothing was more useful to a girl, than committing to her care the annual sum requisite to her expences. The pleasure of saving a trifle for some favourite poor child, or an indigent widow, excited their personal frugality: the attention it called out to *little things*, and the habits of order it promoted, were of the most important use to a young woman, who, living with good and tender parents, without wants, and void of cares, was in danger of becoming ignorant of the value of money, and heedless. I know I should manage my own affairs admirably," added she, fondly kissing him, "for you see that I have not forgotten my dear mother's lessons, nor her example." My father, subdued by this appeal, and softened by caresses so artfully, but season-

ably bestowed, immediatcly gave her twenty guineas. She gratefully received them, and with bewitching grace and gaiety, wrote him in much form, an acquittance. He laughed, but was not displeased with her accuracy. "If," said he, "you can keep your accounts as well as you have done this, you will be fit for a merchant's wife in time."—"Never fear," cried she, "you shall see how expert I am: I will first pay my *debts*, and then keep day-book and ledger of what remains." My father, surprised, asked what *debts* she could probly have incurred "They are those," replied she, "not only of gratiude, but of justice: my brother Percival has purchased books for my use, which he needed not for his own, and I know he wishes to enlarge his little store, but has not the means. Have I my dear and tender father's permission to share with him *this* his bounty? I shall have sufficient remaining." Conscience, or

nature, seconded the sweet pleader. He gave her a note for five and twenty pounds for me, and finished by saying, "you may as well say nothing of this to your sister." Never shall I forget her transports when she related this incident to me. "Take it," said she, pushing the whole sum toward me," take it as the first fruits of that affection, which my father will soon shew you. Oh! if he were but left to his own goodness of heart! how happy should we be, and how happy would he be himself! But have courage, my dear Percival, we shall succeed, for we will merit his love; and he will be just." I received my present with more contentment of heart than I can express; and Mary begged I would be her purse-bearer for the greater part of her treasure, adding, that she had no other means of securing it from her sister's enquiry, who took upon her to examine her drawers at her pleasure.

CHAP. V.

Memoirs of the Flint Family continued.

IT was soon after this little event that my enjoyments were augmented by the arrival of Mr. Howard, who served the parish of Tarefield as curate to Mr. Snughead's predecessor, and who took up his residence as a boarder and lodger at Mr. Wilson's. Few circumstances could have more elated my spirits. The most intimate friendship had united us at Oxford. We were of the same College, and had enjoyed the instructions, and the good opinion of the same respectable tutor. Howard was my senior,

and unquestionably my superior in learning: I had experienced the advantages resulting from this circumstance; for his attainments were a fund on which I drew for my own benefit. The external graces of this young man corresponded with the endowments of his mind; and the elegant scholar and unaffected gentleman was distinguished at the university, as the handsomest man there.

Comliness in form and feature, was the hereditary donation which Howard had received from his family, with its high pretensions to ancient splendour and honours. Fortune had so sunk its prosperity, that his father had earned his bread by his sword; and on his death, in the field of battle, left to his young widow, with a small life annuity, and a pension from government, this only child, then an infant at the breast. The spirit of Howard animated the partner of his adverse fortune; she devoted herself to

the care of her son; but with anxious solicitude implanted in him her own sentiments in regard to a military life; and by a rigid oeconomy, and the sacrifice of her own comforts, she was enabled to place him in a profession, which united the ideas of honour and safety for him, with peace of mind to herself. To invite a guest to my father's table, was not amongst the privileges which I enjoyed at Tarefield. Satisfied by finding myself received at Mr. Wilson's with hospitality, and the frankness so inherent in the mind of this worthy man, I neither regretted the apparently uncivil omission which rendered my friend a stranger to my home, nor wished to see him received there. Mary, approaching to her eighteenth year, was a dangerous object for Howard's sensibility; and he was formed to please her. These precautions of prudence and consideration settled my mode of conduct during the first week or two

of Howard's residence; but nothing was talked of at the hall but "the *handsome curate*" "the *fine preacher*," who was come to Tarefield." My father, never a punctual church-goer, and who had been long disgusted by the old curate's Yorkshire dialect, and his ignorance, to which was unluckily added, his not playing either at cribbage or back-gammon, had, when disposed to say his prayers in a church, preferred that in the next parish, now in the hands, as it was then, of Mr. Greenwood; who was also a friend of Mr. Howard's, and who had been the principal inducement for his acceptance of the curacy of Tarefield. I was called upon for my report of my friend's merits, and truth dictated my answer. "It is very strange you never mentioned his arrival," observed Miss Flint; "your friend must entertain a poor opinion of the hospitality of Tarefield-hall from the neglect he has received from us. It is

rather odd, that he should not have called on your father; such an attention would have been proper; but I suppose he was prevented." This remark was not intended to fall to the ground; and contrary to my usual custom, I took care it should not. "It has never been a question," replied I, "between Howard and myself, under which of our roofs we should enjoy each others society. I neither invited, nor repulsed his appearance here; for he never mentioned the subject: if he had, I should have told him, that his introduction did not depend upon *me*. My father sees no company; and I should not have presumed to ask to his table, a *guest*, who had no better title to his notice than being my *friend*."— "I am not unwilling, Percival," said my father, "to receive him with that *title*, whatever you may think, provided I can understand him better than the last dunderhead that was here. Does How-

ard play back-gammon?" I could only answer for the purity of his English, and his cheerful temper. The conference concluded by my being desired to engage Mr. Howard and Mr. Greenwood to dine at the hall on the following Sunday. Nearly a week's penance was softened to Miss Flint by the preparations needful for the expected guests. To the important concerns of the table were superadded those which regarded her personal decorations; for, as she observed, she had lived such a recluse, that she was hardly fit to be seen by a gentleman.

From the day of this visit, Tarefield experienced unknown delights. My father found the curate an excellent hand at back-gammon, "when he minded what he was doing." The honey of Hybla was on Miss Lucretia's lips; and her smiles were the signal for every one's merriment. My father became good humoured, and of course less the invalid.

He now thought himself equal to a journey to London, which he had long meditated, and which he considered as indispensibly necessary to his affairs. My sister earnestly seconded his intention, *demonstrating* that he would be the better for a change of scene, and the exercise it would give him. "Take your *pet* with you," added she with a gracious nod, "shew her London for a month, and you will return home a young man, and leave behind you those habits of retirement, which have contributed more to make you an old one than either your years or your infirmities." My father observed that he should have too much business on his hands to permit him to shew Mary "the lions," but that the ensuing winter, it was probable, he should pass some weeks in London, and carry with him his whole family. Miss Lucretia's logic had been too conclusive to be recanted; and she saw my father depart

for London without his *pet*. Hope however, remained at Tarefield, and so whispered success, that this defeat was apparently forgotten in new expedients. These were of that sort which it was impossible for poor Howard to overlook or mistake. He confessed his embarrassment to me; and with that integrity of mind which marked his course through life, he declared his love for my angelic Mary. I did not forget my duty, Miss Cowley, although I well knew there was not a man on earth better qualified to be her protector and to render her happy. I failed not to place before my friend the insuperable obstacles which would oppose his wishes, from his want of fortune, and from the influence of the disappointed, and already too envious sister. I pointed out to him the necessity of his being less frequently at the hall, and pleaded Mary's peace as endangered by his persisting in a passion so calculated to reach

her innocent bosom. Mr. Greenwood engaged to do his parochial duty for him for a month; in which time my father would be at home, and a more guarded intercourse could be established. Mary affected no concealments with me on the subject of her dejection when Howard left us. Love had made her quick-sighted; and attributing my friend's absence to its true cause, she lamented Miss Lucretia's folly as the only impediment to her happiness, "being certain that no father could reject such a man as Mr. Howard."

I will not prolong my narrative with the arguments which you will naturally suppose I urged against this fond and fallacious belief. Her tears subdued much more than her promises satisfied me, although she repeatedly engaged "to act with a prudence which I should approve; to wait patiently for *years*; never to cause the least vexation to her

dear father, and even to avoid offending her sister by an acknowledgment of Howard's preference." All was easy! time would do every thing for Mary, except to render her indifferent to Mr. Howard! I promised to be neuter, and I kept my word. The lovers, as it will appear, found an expedient to keep up a correspondence, without implicating my honour, or alarming my vigilance. My father's unaccountable detention in London was forgotten by the curate's return, and unable to resist the attraction which drew him to the hall, poor Howard accelerated those measures which it had cost him so many hours of privation to retard. He was present when my father's letter to Miss Flint announced his marriage, with orders to prepare the house for the reception of its new mistress. Our astonishment at this intelligence was succeeded by our cares for Lucretia, who from fury, sunk into

violent fits. When restored to more composure, she hung faintly on Howard's arm, and said, "Be not discouraged, my dear Howard! I will convince my father that I have as good a right as himself to be happy. Let the minx whom he has married, be his slave. My duty shall be devoted to a husband, who will not disgrace his family.—He shall, Howard, consent to the justice of my demand. I will force him to be generous; you shall have no reason to complain of fortune!" Poor Howard, sinking with confusion and unable to speak, was relieved by my calling him to assist me. Mary, who in stupid silence had witnessed this scene, fainted; and he was permitted to retire, after having assisted me in conveying her to her room.

You need not be informed, Madam, that in Lady Maclairn's now faded form we beheld the beauteous bride whom my father, in a few days, presented to his

children. The more attractive charms of her youth may still be traced in the modest and pensive expression of her countenance. She was extremely agitated on her first appearance, and seemed intimidated to a painful degree. Her brother, Mr. Flamall, accompanied her to the Hall; and by an affected gaiety, endeavoured to encourage his sister, and to recommend himself. Her manners succeeded much better to reconcile us to the *stepmother*. A quiet melancholy, a mild and endearing attention to every one around her, indicated the sweetness of her temper, and the authority by which she had been compelled to marry a man of seventy. For some days Miss Flint refused to quit her room. My father's resentment was appeased by his gentle help-mate; and she entreated him to assure his daughter, that she neither meant to interfere in her management of his family, nor to lessen her influence.

"Tell Miss Flint," added she, "that my office in this house will be confined to my duty, as it regards your ease and comfort; and that in order to be happy myself, it is incumbent upon me to render your children so. I come not as a rival, but as a friend, to this abode." She looked at us with emotion, and a tear escaped. Some concessions produced the submission which my father wished for; a general amnesty took place, and Mr. Flamall so entirely diverted Miss Flint's resentments, that, to my astonishment, she was obsequiously polite to Mrs. Flint. Howard paid his visit of ceremony; my father received him with his usual cordiality; but his general absence was unnoticed. Flamall played at backgammon with my father, and his young wife engaged his attention. A hasty call from time to time prevented curiosity or enquiry; and I secretly rejoiced that Howard was less in Mary's sight. She was

by recalling my most indifferent actions, to find a clew by which to unravel this unaccountable jealousy which my father had shewn. Conscious that I had never in the most remote manner, either experienced or discovered a sentiment beyond that good-will and respect which my actions had evinced, I mentioned, in the course of my conversation with Howard, an incident of a recent date, which at the moment struck me, and which then appeared to explain, in some sort, my father's ill-humour, though not his suspicions.

Mrs. Flint, at the breakfast-table, a few days before, had, with cheerfulness, reminded my father of a promise he had made her in town. "He told me," said she, smiling on my sisters, "that you would like current coin better than fashionable tinsel; and thus prevented me from adding to the incumbrances of band-boxes; but he must keep his word,

and enable me to acquit myself handsomely; otherwise, if you will help me, we will pick his pocket now, for I know we shall meet with a good booty." The poor fond old man kissed her, and said she could do what she pleased with him without assistance. She blushed with genuine modesty, took the offered purse, and gratefully gave us each a twenty pound note. I thought at the moment that my father's brow clouded; and I believe she thought so likewise, for, with a sweet smile, she thanked him for his goodness to her. I received, however, my gift with a bow of acknowledgment, not unmixed with the painful idea of my dependance. Howard listened to this little account; but he informed me that Mary had mentioned to him a conversation she had accidentally heard before the wedding gift was mentioned; and that from what had passed between Miss Flint and her maid, she was certain her

father suspected the motives of my civilities to the young mother-in law. Let it suffice, Madam, I determined to leave Tarefield; nor did my friend Howard endeavour to oppose my resolution. He saw that it was impossible I could live at the hall, and that my health and talents were sinking under the continual checks imposed on my activity and spirits.

He solemnly engaged to watch over the only object of my tender regrets, and to maintain his pretentions to her at the point of his life; to guard her as a sacred deposit left in his hands, and never to urge her to commit an act that I could not approve. I knew Howard, Miss Cowley, and I was satisfied. The remainder of the day was given to my secret preparations, and the following morning I was on the road to London; my good father's wedding gift in my purse, and my blessed mother's pocket-

book in my bosom. Providence indeed was my guide! for I found a brother in Mr. Heartley, who had recently married the amiable lady you have heard villified at Tarefield-hall. Their union had been delayed from motives of prudence. A patron of merit appeared, and Heartley gave up the possession of the law for a post in the War-office. My friend succeeded in getting me a lieutenancy of marines; and with Heartley's management, my dear mother's dying gift was like the widow's cruise of oil. During my detention in town I received letters from Howard and my sister Mary. I copy a part of my friend's; these are its contents;—

"Love, my dear Percival, had supplied to our ingenuity a friend not more secret than yourself, but much more tractable and convenient. The hollow oak at the avenue gate received our letters from the time your prudence re-

fused the office. I wrote to my beloved girl the whole detail of our conversation the day preceding your departure, and depositing it in the wonted place, hastened to pay my morning visit at the hall." I was prepared for the question, 'Did I know what was become of you?' I answered to the point. You had been with me the day before, and had mentioned your intention of setting out for London as that morning.—'I told you, Sir,' cried Miss Flint, giving me a significant look, 'that Mr. Howard is not one whom he would trust with his idle schemes!'—'You are mistaken, Madam,' answered I, 'Mr. Flint was explicit with me in regard to his motives for leaving Tarefield. He told me he was weary of idleness, and was determined to seek employment.'—'He has pleased himself, Mr. Howard,' observed your father, with much coolness. 'I can have no objection to his plan, for I have long recommended employment to him; but he has

learned to despise my advice, and to think every man a *monster* who plants sugar-canes. A few hardships will convince him, that the bread earned by the sweat of the brow is as laboriously earned in Europe as in the West-Indies.'—'Percival's talents will, I should hope,' answered I, 'secure him from so bitter an experiment; and his education has not been subservient to commercial views.'—'So much the worse,' replied he, with passion, 'so much the worse for him! He would have been getting forward by this time; with Oliver as his assistant, he would have had three or four hundred pounds per annum.'—'Well,' replied I, 'let us hope he will meet fortune in his own way; and that will never be a dishonourable one.'—'Pray do you know where he means to seek the fickle goddess?' asked Mr. Flamall.—'Were she not blind as well as fickle,' replied I, 'she would seek him; but real merit and persevering cou-

rage will, in the long run, get before her.' —'In that case he must be more persevering than he has been,' observed your father, 'and better informed as to what will suit him. His Latin and Greek will do him no good, for he has discovered that priestcraft is as bad as the negro trade; but this comes of a man's having more ballast than his head can carry.'— 'Whoever has insinuated into your mind, Sir, this opinion of your son,' replied I, 'did not know him; and I assert that he desired nothing more ardently, than to be ordained to exercise the functions of a parish priest.' He looked vexed, and said he had heard a very different story. I had given my sweet girl a look of intelligence, and she comprehended it. Mrs. Flint had tenderly taken her seat by her, and appeared anxious to console her. Finding your father said no more on the subject of your various *sins*, I rose to depart; and, resisting all Miss Flint's

persuasions, was fairly making my escape, when your father graciously pressed me to stay and dine with him, adding, 'I am not angry with you, Mr. Howard, because you are Percival's friend: he may think as he pleases of me, and follow his own conceit. When he is pennyless he will find out his mistakes, and it may be, not find his father the *slave-driver*, as he calls me.'—You must, my dear Percival, write to him, &c. &c."

I did write to my father, Miss Cowley. I wish to forget his answer. He reproached me with having gained an interest in his wife's heart. She had sorrowed for me, and had even solicited for my return. He neither wished for my success, nor sent me a guinea. I embarked with my regiment for Canada; from thence I again wrote to my father, and also to my brother Oliver. The reply of the latter was not calculated to have removed my prejudices, if I had en-

tertained any which were unfavourable to his traffic. "He was sorry that I had disobliged my good father, by a conduct which few men could overlook, and which he thought highly criminal, when my affinity was taken into the account. But idleness was the root of all evil; and he hoped I should, in my employment, retrieve my lost time, and regain my father's favour. He had four children; his wife, a teeming woman, expecting a fifth blessing. He wished me well, and and was my affectionate brother Oliver." Here our correspondence closed.

During my three or four years banishment I heard of my father's increasing infirmities, and the discontents at the hall; of Howard's having lost his mother, and his being the husband of Mary, my beloved sister; and, in a word, of my father's death, and our inheritance of a shilling. The lieutenant returned to his hospitable asylum a captain. The Heart-

leys "killed for him the fatted calf," as the *returned* blessing, not the prodigal. Nothing, however, could detain me in town; and with all my worldly wealth, namely, thirty guineas in my purse, I took my place in a northern stage-coach; and quitting it within a few miles of this spot, endeavoured to hire a horse. Some difficulty arising, to which my impatience could not submit, I determined to leave my portmanteau at the inn, and to walk. I set forward, but was soon overtaken by a heavy rain. A stage-waggon was in sight, and knowing that I had no clothes with me, I accepted the shelter. A neatly-dressed country woman was the only passenger. The rain poured down in torrents, and she began her chat by observing that I had been lucky. I sighed. "Mayhap, Sir," continued she curiously examining my uniform, "you are not used to ride in waggon; but is it not better than being wet to the skin?" I said I

found it so; and that it was comfortable. "Oh!" returned she, "many of your honour's poor soldiers would think it so!" Curiosity next came forward. "Had I far to go?"—"Only to the Abbey farm," answered I.—"We pass the door," returned she; "but you will find Mrs. Wilson in great trouble; she is sad indeed."—"Then you know the family?" said I.—"Know them!" repeated she; "who does not, that lives in the parish, and I may say for miles round?"—"I am sorry to hear she is ill," observed I, anxious for more intelligence.—"Why as for the matter of health," returned she, "thank God, she has no reason to complain; but she is sadly troubled to see the curate so poorly. I suppose, Sir, you know Mr. and Madam Howard, who live at the Abbey."—I bowed my head. —"It will make your heart ach, I can tell you," continued she, "to see the poor gentleman; he is a going, *that's for*

certain! He has never held up his head since that old rascal of a father died, and left Madam only a shilling out of all his money. Dame Dobs, who nurses Miss, told me a week *agone* she did not know which of the dear souls would go first, for Madam Howard was a mere *notomy* with fretting. Ah! Sir, you may well turn up your eyes to heaven," continued she, with eagerness, " they will find a a God to comfort them there at least; and that is more than their enemies will. They have the staff in their hands here, but the devil gave it them! I would not be the mistress of the hall for this waggon loaded with gold! They say there is no sleeping in one's bed at the hall since the old man died. I do not wonder at it. How should his soul rest after such wickedness? There is Madam Howard and her dear babe left with a shilling! There is a poor son, he is drove from the hall a downright vagabond, if he be alive;

but some say he died of hunger and cold in some great forest beyond sea, and was eaten by the blacks; and that his spirit also has been seen in the room where he kept his books, for he was a great scholar. I did not know him, but Dame Dobs did, and she says he was only too good for them."—"What is become of the widow Flint?" asked I.—"Why she, Sir, as a body may say, 'jumped out of the frying-pan into the fire.' She married a second time, with as bad luck as the first. She is a lady, but her husband is in a sad sort of a way, and looks like a ghost. Poor soul! she has had hard trials! But she is not of my mind. I would sooner beg my bread, with my children at my back, than live as she does, like 'a toad under a harrow;' But the money!—Aye, there's the rub!—Master Philip is to have all Miss Flint's wealth, and so all is submitted to; but she may find herself a loser in the end;

for Mr. Flamall is as cunning as the devil himself, and only pretends to love Master Flint for his own advantage. They are a precious set! I would sooner wear lindsey-woolsey than Miss Flint's silks and satins! But, dear me, she knows she is hated in the parish; and that we all pray to God to spare to us Mr. Howard, who is a lamb, Sir, and too good for this wicked world; and when Miss Flint comes to her dying bed, what good will all her money do her, who has overlooked all her relations, *if nothing worse?* It is but lately I settled in these parts; but people have not forgot to talk. They say Madam Howard has been cruelly treated."—Unable to suppress my agitation, I said the vehicle incommoded me, and that I would walk the remaining part of the road. The rain had abated of its violence, and I quitted my loquacious, but honest companion.

Prepared as I had thus been, I could

not without the pangs of despair behold my emaciated friend; and the faded form of my once lovely and blooming sister. I dare not recall the anguish of our first embrace! Let it suffice; it appeared that Heaven in its mercy conducted me to them for their consolation. Howard's spirits were renewed, the cherub Mary smiled in her cradle, and we forgot the past in our present comforts. Tarefield-hall was shunned; for I feared my impetuosity, and dreaded to disturb the tranquillity of my dear invalids. Heartley gained me three months leave of absence beyond the term allotted me, and I was happy;—yes, Miss Cowley, happy! for I perceived that I was the cordial of health to those whom I loved more than myself. Howard's cough disappeared; and he began to talk of freeing Mr. Greenwood from his fatigue of going through the parochial duties. This led him to expatiate on that gentleman's generous and

unequalled kindness. "I will," added he smiling, "relate to you circumstances, in which you will find that in Greenwood's friendship heaven gave me a full equivolent *even for your absence.* So prepare yourself for a long story, and for acknowledging that Mr. Greenwood with all his gravity and sanctity favoured two lovers more than you did." He pressed my hand with affection and proceeded.

"You have seen detailed in my Mary's letters to me, the growth of Mr. Flamall's influence at the hall. For a time we exulted at his success, as it promised, that by directing Miss Flint's unfortunate fancy from me to himself, we should be released from a serious obstacle to our wishes. On the death of my dear mother, and after a month's absence, I pleaded business and want of spirits for neglecting to visit my kind friends at the hall. Miss Flint took a particular

liking to Mrs. Wilson, and visited her daily. Terrified by this attack on my strong-hold, I consulted Greenwood; and made a full confession of my attachment to my sweet Mary, not omitting your fatherly counsels and her trust in my devoted heart. He could only repeat your sage exhortations, and pity me. Mrs. Wilson was a more useful confidant, for I had notice of the enemy's approach; and my escapes were so well managed, that, foiled in the purpose of her frequent visits, Miss Lucretia forgot her dear Mrs. Wilson, and at once made known her intentions to her father. Mr. Flint's letter contained a very civil approbation of my conduct, "in as much as I had practised a prudence which did honour to my principles, it certainly being an improbable event, that he should favour an union so unequal in regard to fortune; but finding his daughter's happiness depended on her marrying *me*, and

that I had only been withheld from applying to him from an honest scruple, he informed me that I was secure of his consent, that he should allow Lucretia four hundred pounds per annum, and on the death of the rector induct me to the living of Tarefield. For his further consideration he made no doubt, I would patiently wait till his decease. Good God!" continued poor Howard, "what were my emotions on reading this letter! The exchange of one word in it would have raised me to envied bliss, and with patience could I have waited for all other considerations had your father been determined to rival in longevity Methusalem himself. But it was not *Mary Flint*. I answered his letter, and with all the expressions of respect which the subject demanded, finished by asserting, that I had long been an engaged man, and too warmly attached to a beloved object to conceive any measured conduct necessa-

ry; that I had on many different occasions, spoken unequivocally of the state of my affections, in Miss Flint's presence; and that my behaviour had never for an instant contradicted my words; nor could any motives of interest dispose me to relinquish a woman whom I loved. You will conclude that my favour at the hall ceased; and in my disgrace, even my pulpit eloquence was forgotten; for the family, when they were disposed to enter a place of public worship, went to Greenwood's parish. Secure as we mutually were on the side of faith and love, my dear Mary and myself contrived with the help of the faithful old oak and those hopes to which we fondly cleaved, to support those little trials of our patience. I had warned her never to keep my letters, and to be prepared for the inspection of a jealous woman. She was so docile to my wishes, that she not only obeyed me in this

point, but from a secret misgiving, to the motive of which I was a stranger, she buried in the avenue her little store of gold. This secret I was told when she became my wife. She had been disgusted by Mr. Flamall's behaviour, and dreaded his cunning. Her mother-in-law's kindness favoured her reserve to him, and with growing attachment these young women would soon have been friends.

"Fortune now became weary of a love intrigue like ours. My beauteous sylph was seen by Miss Flint's woman, taking a letter of mine from the oak, and dropping one of her own into it. The alarm was given. My letter, seized by the furious sister, and her's, brought by the vile informer to her lady, were proofs of our intelligence which admitted of no palliation. I had, in my letter, very freely mentioned Miss Flint; praying to fortune that she might succeed in *her at-*

tacks on Flamall's heart, who, Mary had informed me, was become her favourite. She had gone farther into this subject in her letter, and in a word, we had not been sparing in our animadversions on them, nor in our compassion for the nominal mistress of the mansion, who had not the courage to pull a bell-string in her own house. I will hasten from the scene that followed this discovery," continued Howard, wiping the sickly dew from his brow, "to what purpose should I repeat cruelties at which an inquisitor, if not lost to feeling, would blush?——Mary has told me since, that she is convinced they meant to make her mad. Imprisoned in her room, suffered to see no one but Miss Flint, and the woman who had betrayed her; without books, without needle-work, or a candle when dark! reproaches! even blows, Percival! She said she thought sometimes, that her senses were affected, for she frequently

found to her surprise, that she had forgotten to go to bed. On one of these occasions she was alarmed by hearing some one at the window calling her gently by name; despair rendered her fearless, and, on approaching it, she found it was a young man who lived in the house as groom. 'I come to serve you Miss,' said he, 'because it is my duty. Your dear mother saved mine from the grave. I am Frank Crofts, to whom you used to bring cakes at Chelsea. Mr. Greenwood knows all about me, and my scheme; here is a letter for you from him; and I shall come for you on Saturday night; fear nothing; try to be easy: you will soon be with my mother, and honest people.' So saying, he retired. Mr. Greenwood's letter was satisfactory. And two nights of repose gave her strength to descend from the room two stories high by means of a ladder. Frank securing some linen she had provided,

gave himself no trouble to remove the means of her escape. She recollected her concealed treasure, and he disinterred it. Greenwood was at the avenue gate with a decent looking man and a chaise. He told her she was safe, and that her guide would protect her. She instantly got into the carriage, which was an open, old-fashioned vehicle, with two stout horses, and driven by her conductor. They soon lost sight of the village. Frank retired to his pillow in the stable-chamber: and Greenwood returned home. I have given to my tale the language of romance," continued Howard, smiling, "we are now come to the climax. After morning-service, this lad in passing me, said, 'Go to Mr. Greenwood's,' and he instantly joined some people at the church-gate. I looked at him, and I perceived there was more in his manner, than could be understood by a common observer; with a palpitating heart I took

the road to my friend's house. I had not proceeded far, when Frank, breathless with speed, overtook me. 'She is safe, Sir!' said he, 'blessed be God, she is safe. Mr. Greenwood will tell you all all about it. They cannot murder her now.' He darted from me. 'I must not be seen with you,' cried he, measuring back his hasty steps. Judge of my feelings! I cannot describe them! Greenwood suffered my tears to flow; and at length begun with his darling topic of the excellency of human nature when uncorrupted by the world's contagion. This Frank *Armstrong*, as he properly styled himself under his borrowed name," continued my friend, "has been the deliverer of Miss Flint, from the simple suggestions of gratitude and pity. He brought me a letter from his mother who lives at Newcastle, in which she recommends him, to leave no means unemployed to rescue your mistress from her hard

captivity, to consult me on every step, and to inform me of the obligations she was under to Mary's mother. These were fully stated, and Frank proceeded to his own confession. He preferred being a sailor to working with his brother-in-law, a wealthy farmer, who lived five miles from Newcastle; he left his good friends secretly, and by chance stopped at the Ram for refreshment. There he met a groom just discharged from the hall, and who disgusted by Miss Flint, entertained Frank with the history of the family, and gave vent to his own resentments. Miss Mary was the heroine of this history. She was an '*angel*,' but with the rest, made miserable by the '*she-devil*' who ruled in the house; and he had left the hall in a fine '*kick up*;' for they had found out that Miss Mary had been writing a love-letter to the curate her sister's sweetheart. Curiosity appears to have been the first stimulus

to Frank's project; he won on the landlord to recommend him to the vacated post, and Tarefield being in no great repute for kitchen comforts, he was engaged on trial, and entered into the family as groom, under the name of Frank Armstrong. In a few days Frank was in the family secrets, the kitchen account was in the captive's favour. Anne, the chamber-maid, to use Frank's words, made his blood boil in his veins. He wrote to his mother, promising he would never go to sea, if she would come and take away Miss Mary. The good woman's letter to me, was an undeniable proof of her principles and prudence. I observed, that the only difficulty was to remove Mary from the house. 'Leave that to me, Sir,' said he, exultingly, 'leave that to me, I will die rather than she should! only, as Miss does not know me, I must have a letter from you: she may think that I am an enemy.'

Struck by this acuteness, I gave him a short note and he disappeared. The next evening he called upon me. 'All will be ready for Saturday night,' said he. 'My brother will be here. I have contrived it.'—I stared with surprise. 'Why you know, Sir,' said he, 'I could not do without a ladder, seeing Miss Mary is locked into a chamber two stories high; and as for unbolting and unbarring, were she even below stairs that would be impossible, without making more noise than we want. So, Sir, I have provided ladders in plenty, and what is better, as high as the house. He laughed immoderately. It was a good thought, cried he, though I say it; for I have made them a job which will put money into their pockets for the use of the ladder. An explanation followed. I found that Frank could reason on causes and effects. A six weeks drought, said he, with a new moon, promised rain, and I

was determined that there should be no want of water at the hall when it did come, so I have been in the false roof and have made such breaches in the tiling, that the garrets are afloat every shower that falls, and we have had plenty! just as though God Almighty had sent them for the purpose of serving the poor young lady.'—But why did you chuse Saturday night? asked I, on any other I could have gone with her. I will answer that in a moment, replied he. First your honour must know, that Sunday is a Sabbath of rest with our folks at the hall; I had them safe in their beds till eight or nine o'clock, and there was time gained. Secondly, Mr. Webster, my brother, could not so well come on any other day, because of his horses: and in the last place, said he, rubbing his hands with vivacity, I shall never as long as I live forget Sunday, whether I am at church or at home. The better the day,

the better the deed, say I. God will bless it again, if I can save this poor soul! He then gave me with emotion the account of her treatment which he had learned from Anne the chamber-maid, who was as he said Miss Mary's "*true friend.*"

"Yesterday evening Mr. Webster made his appearance, we concerted our measures, and all has succeeded. The rescued prisoner is now on the road to a shelter, and she is safe from pursuit.

"I am," continued Mr. Greenwood with dignity, "perfectly satisfied with my own motives for an interference in this business. It is the duty of every man to assist the oppressed. Mr. Flint by his imbecility and injustice has forfeited the rights of a parent; he has given up his authority into the hands of an enraged and disappointed woman, whom he well knew to be ungovernable in her passions, and under whose power he himself groans. I have acted for this father, Mr.

Howard; he may one day thank me, as the deliverer of his child. It requires but a superficial knowledge of human nature, and little experience in life, to know the fatal effects of counteracted and opposed passion, in a youthful mind, when cruelty is the means employed to accomplish the purpose. I am not disposed to believe that many girls die of love; but I have seen many examples of an evil more to be dreaded than death, by an improper and harsh opposition to this passion, as well as others; and when I saw your Mary I was convinced that I was acting in favour of humanity and justice. I have, however," continued he, "engaged her promise of obedience to my directions; and I now claim your word of honour, to be governed by me. I will endeavour to see Mr. Flint; have patience; write to your beloved Mary. I will take care she has your letters; and you will soon hear from her. But you

must not quit Tarefield without my permission." I answered him with my tears; he was satisfied.

A month passed. Greenwood found Mr. Flint inaccessible. He desired to see Miss Flint; and at length gained his point. With well affected concern she mentioned her father's illness as the reason of his refusing his friendly visits, adding, that no consolation could at that moment reach a mind sunk to despair, by the conduct of an ungrateful and too tenderly beloved child. She entered into the detail of my infamous duplicity, and Mary's as infamous advances to my preference. I wave however, continued she, my own injuries, bitterly as I still feel them; but the letters now in my father's hands I can never forget. The cruel mockery, the insolence of them, as they relate to him, is unpardonable! Would you believe it possible, added she, that amongst these proofs of depravity in a

girl so young, my father has one, which has convinced him, that she was in Percival's secrets; and that she favoured him in his profligate inclination for Mrs. Flint, telling him, that in time she might listen to him more kindly. Could you give credit to this report Mr. Greenwood asked she, on a less certain evidence than mine? Even yours, replied Mr. Greenwood, is insufficient; for I will maintain every syllable you have uttered to be false, till I have seen those letters, and have confronted them with the declaration of the supposed writers. When I see Mr. Flint less a prisoner than he is, when he is permitted to listen to *truth* and to *justice*, you may have, Madam, better claims to my confidence than you have at present. If your visit was intended as an *insult*, replied she, rising with fury, its purpose is accomplished; and your character, which you have forgotten, shall be your protection, till you leave this spot. It shall

do more, said Mr. Greenwood calmly, for it is proper I should warn you to pause in the road you are in. I am well informed, Miss Flint, and I caution you, as the minister of a master who "hateth the oppressor, and abhorreth the workers in iniquity," to consider what you have done to offend him; and what you still meditate to do, in order to ruin that innocent which is God's peculiar care.

He instantly quitted the room, leaving her confounded or choaked with rage. Mr. Greenwood soon after gave me my leave of absence. I flew to my every earthly good. Mrs. Croft had conducted her to Berwick, and on my joining her, we were united in the presence of as many witnesses as curiosity and the admiration of Mary's beauty collected. We passed a week with Mr. Webster, and finally settled here, with a welcome of a long hoped for blessing. Frank was early in his visit of congratulation, and

our gratitude overcame him. He gazed on Mary. "Now I see," cried he, "the same face I so well remembered; but Lord help me! when you came, like a reed, down the ladder, and I saw your deadly paleness, I could hardly help thinking that ghosts had bones, and that I had one in my arms, for you looked for all the world like one. Who could have believed, Sir, "added he," turning to me with exultation, that a month or six weeks with my mother, could have made roses so cruelly frost-bitten, blown again! Oh! I would give the world if Miss Flint could see you both at this moment! she would be paid interest for all her wicked labours! but she will have it, yes, yes, Sir the reckoning will stand; there are no sponges for her accounts! you know that, Mr. Howard, no *white-washing* in the creed you teach!"

"I am prolix, Percival," continued my brother, "but you share in the en-

thusiasm, which has for its object, a character like *this.*" He at length, sedately gave us the particulars of the discovery of Mary's escape, which, you will easily imagine, produced the utmost confusion: I was naturally the first person suspected as having aided her; but I had, fortunately, passed the Saturday at Bishop's-Auckland, and had slept there. This *alibi* proved, and my remaining quiet at Wilson's perplexed them, and lost in conjectures, they gave up the fruitless question. Frank was requested to convey our letters to Mr. Flint. My master keeps his room, said he, sorrowfully; and Madam Flint no more dares to act in the matter, than to swallow fire, or poison, poor soul! But do not cry, my dear lady, all will turn out well in time. Let me consider, I will contrive! Anne goes into the room, and there is nothing she can refuse me, she is as honest as the the day is light, and loves you, Madam.

Never fear, you have got Mr. Howard at your side, and it is a long lane indeed that has no end. I know but of one that never ends, let them take that who like it, say I; but yours is a *sure road*, Madam, and never mind, altho' it is not, at present, all on the nail. "Oh Percival," exclaimed poor Howard, lifting up his expressive eyes to Heaven, "what is man when true to his endowments! He is indeed but little lower than the angels, and worthy of the all-perfect hand which made him! But I shall meet this fellow-mortal, and rejoice with him in his glorious recompence! Our letters were committed to his faithful hands. Two or three days after, he came to make his farewell visit, and to request Mary to write to his mother, that she was satisfied with his conduct. Our letters to the hall were returned, the *seals unbroken*. Anne was discharged at a moment. Mr. Flamall, said Frank, paid me my wages, and told

me I did not suit my place nor the family. I could have told you that, said I, long ago; but you had nothing to do with me, nor I with you, Mr. Flamall. I spoke as I felt, Sir, added he, nodding to me. He warned me if I valued a whole skin, not to be insolent; but I told him that neither my skin nor my honesty would be in danger from him. He said, I was a low scoundrel. I never heard, said I, keeping my ground, of a scoundrel who was not low, though he tacked *squire* or *counsellor* to his name. He advanced to strike me, but he thought better of it, I believe, for he turned on his heel. I wish to the Lord he had, he would have met with his match at a hard blow, though he will never find one in his roguery. Anne says there are fine doings going on between him and Miss Flint. So much the better, let them have their swing, till their own noose catches them! 'tis the old one's trick, you know *that*,

Sir, continued he, and have often told us that his snares were of our own making, and that we had arms in our hands, that would bind his, if we were disposed to use them. But I must go, added he, to fetch my things, and I will call again for your letter, Madam, and my blessing. He bowed, and hastily left us, penetrated with admiration and gratitude.

From this time we have not seen him; but we hear from his mother, that he is married and settled, and continues in the line of conduct that was to be expected from such beginnings of virtue and goodness.

To Mr. Greenwood's and Mr. Wilson's exertions in my favour, I stand indebted for the bread which has supported me here; the former convinced the rector, that I was an honest man; and the latter employed such zeal in my cause, that a paper was signed by most of my flock, containing such a report of me, as proved that I was qualified for a bishopric at

least. Happy in the wife of my bosom, cherished by the worthy beings who sheltered us as the honour and blessings of their roof, I should have forgotten Tarefield-hall, with its inmates, but my poor Mary heard continually of her father's declining health, and prompted by her tenderness, she was as continually making attempts to see him. A letter she sent to Mrs. Flint, reached her, and in a few days we were surprised by the sight of Mary's clothes and linen, which were left without a message. In arranging them, with the sweet hope which this consideration inspired, a note dropped from a gown sleeve; it was from Mrs. Flint, and contained a bank bill of twenty-five pounds. "I send you as a token of my love, my dear and injured girl," wrote Mrs. Flint, "the inclosed trifle; this is all I am able to do. My interference in respect to sending you your clothes, has been highly resented. Believe, that in me

you have a friend, but alas! that friend is too much oppressed to serve you, or your unhappy father, whose heart still turns to his child. Have patience; write no more to Harriot Flint, she is watched, and hazards her peace even in this simple act of humanity.

"In proportion as your father approached his grave," continued my brother, "my wife became wretched, and my spirits were in continual agitation lest in the concessions which she prompted me to make, I should be censured, as being governed by self-interest. At length we heard of his death, and in due form were summoned by an attorney, a Durham man, to the hall, in order to be present at the opening of Mr. Flint's will. You know its purport. When the lawyer had finished reading, I rose, and taking my nearly sinking Mary's cold hand, I fixed my eyes on the heiress's face. 'This is at least Howard's,' said I, 'and in his

affection at least your sister is *rich.* Neither malice nor envy dare invade these rights. The Being whom we adore is able to provide for us, and the bread he bestows, will be that of peace and a good conscience.' Miss Flint made no reply. Mrs. Flint, who had during this time covered her face from observation, now rose with emotion, and stopping me as I was advancing to the door with my precious burden, she said, 'As Mr. Flint's wife I was dumb; but as his widow I *will* speak. If Mrs. Howard wishes to follow her father's remains, have the goodness, Sir, to let me hear from you.' She hastily left the room before me. The next day my wife received from her a parcel of mourning stuffs; but my heart revolted at favours given to *beggary.* I sent them back with a card, "Mrs. Howard is provided with *mourning.*" A fever of some danger prevented my Mary's thinking of the fu-

al. It was magnificent, and your ther's remains were disinterred and ught hither to rest with her husband's. or Mary has been one of Greenwood's urers ever since; and even my nerves re for a time shaken by their monu-nt, which is in the chancel."

CHAP. VI.

Memoirs of the Flint Family continued.

'MY health had not been spared in these vexations, and its interruptions made a coward of me. I experimentally felt the truth of our favourite Terence's observation, 'I am a man, and have the feelings of a man.' Whilst counting my throbbing pulse, my widowed Mary and helpless child smote on my heart, and weakened still more the springs of life. My little fund of about five hundred pounds had insensibly diminished; you were remote and might *never return;* and I yielded to despondency. But my God

has graciously heard my sighs; you are with me and I am comforted; for you will never forsake my wife and child."—I must pause, Miss Cowley.

I saw with sanguine hopes the renewal of my brother's health and cheerfulness. I received orders to join my regiment, and our embarkation for America soon followed. Once more, oceans divided me from my dear friends! Waving as useless the detail of my military life, I will hasten to a conclusion. My brother's letters were for a time such as I wished; but the arrow had been aimed too well. He died when I was remote; leaving his daughter in her fifth year. My return to England followed in a few months after this event.

In our passage home we captured a rich vessel bound for St. Malo's. In the engagement I lost my leg; but gained six or seven hundred pounds prize money.

On reaching London after a delay thus imposed, I found Heartley on his dying bed; this trial did not accelerate my recovery. A fever succeeded to his last embrace. Alas, his virtues suited not the world he had escaped! Its cold and ungenial maxims could not find admission into a heart glowing with every noble affection. Trusting to vigorous health, and scorning the prudence which gives but to receive, he lived honourably and died poor, leaving his widow with a jointure of barely two hundred pounds per annum, for the support of herself and two children. This inestimable woman found in her difficulties and principles resources for ennobling her character. Her sorrows were reserved for her pillow; and with a calm and collected mind, she disposed of her effects, paid every outstanding debt; and then declared to her friends, her intention of quitting London, in order to give in

retirement those habits to her children, which alone could render them contented and independent. Mr. Wilson's house was the asylum she chose; and in me she saw the guardian whom her husband had named for his son. My dear Mary had her share in these arrangements, and we left town, I having succeeded in my application, and seen my claims established as an invalid on half-pay. We reached this place: and I entered Wilson's friendly gate once more. Again did I fold in my agonizing embrace the image of death. Great and merciful Being! thou wilt not in rigour remember the frenzy of my despair, while, bending over my fainting sister, I called down for vengeance on her destroyer! For some days my soul sickened whilst I contemplated in her emaciated form, the triumph of cruelty and the ravages of sorrow. But she smiled me to resignation; and my heart received the blessings which

Heaven had spared me. Our tranquillity met with no disturbance from the hall. I had been settled more than a month, when one morning, in passing the hall gate, I saw Miss Flint and Mr. Flamall standing in the road opposite to it, as though waiting for some one from the house. I passed them as an absolute stranger. Mr. Flamall called me by name, and added, "Miss Flint, Sir, wishes to speak to you." She advanced, and I stopped. "I should have sent my attorney to you, Sir," said she haughtily, "if I had not thought that you would in less than a month have found leisure to call at the hall."—"When I have any business at the hall, or interest in those who reside there, I shall find *leisure* to call," replied I, with ill-suppressed emotion. "I neither expected, nor desired your visit," answered she, "on my own account; but I beg to know your pleasure in regard to the books you left behind you, when you deserted it."—

"Consult your *lawyer*," replied I; "if it be allowed that I have a right to more than a shilling, send them; I will pay the carriage, as I did the bookseller of whom they were purchased." I walked on, and soon saw that she was joined by Mr. Snughead, to whom she had recently given the living of Tarefield. This circumstance did not contribute to restore my equanimity. Poor Howard pressed on my memory and I returned home dejected.

My books made their appearance on the following day; and contributed to my success as a tutor. Malcolm, Maclairn, and Henry Heartley were my pupils; and neither of them have disgraced me. I pass over all the fluctuations of a malady so fallacious as my sister's. Her approach to the grave was so gradual, that at times she laughed at our precautions, and beguiled us of our fears; but when on the

confines of it, she was untroubled, and spoke of her dissolution with serenity.

One day she told me that she had been writing to Lucretia, and wished me to read the letter before she sealed it. I waved my hand, and turned away my weeping eyes. "Well, I will not urge it," said she putting in a wafer; "but I cannot die in peace, without assuring her, that I sincerely forgive her. I am hastening to an abode, into which no animosities can enter. I have none to impede my entrance; and the time may come, when poor Lucretia will find a consolation in this assurance. I have even recommended my poor child to her regard, as a proof that I have pardoned her unkindness to me. The only sentiment I now can feel for an offending fellow-creature," added she, wiping away a starting tear, "*is compassion;* and I leave you to judge, Percival, of that which now actuates my breast for a *sister,* the

child of the same parents, of a mother without equal in piety and humanity; of a father!"—her voice sunk—"whom I grieved, perhaps more! Do not think I have forgotten my Howard's noble spirit," continued she; "I have not meanly sued for his child's bread. I have not an anxious care for her as far as relates to her maintenance. I have resigned her to *Providence*, and I leave her to you. But were I wholly to omit her in a letter of this kind, it would, I think, have shewn a spirit of pride, and of indifference to my child. Her aunt is rich in this world's wealth, *she* is poor. Lucretia may live to recollect her duty; and in this destitute girl find an object who, without any claims of affinity, will be worthy of her favours. Be not alarmed, my dear Percival," continued she, seeing my emotions, "indeed I have not said too much! You ought to consider that you may be removed, and I have pointed out

to Lucretia, a *positive duty;* I have not solicited *her charity.*"

Mrs. Wilson took charge of this letter. Some time after she returned, her countenance glowing with resentment and the speed she had made. "Thank God!" cried she, showing the letter, "there it is again! For once I have my mind, and what is more, have *spoken* my mind!" Mrs. Howard took the letter with a trembling hand. "Why surely, my dear lamb!" continued the affectionate woman, "you are not grieved that your enemy will thus set her face against you! Her time is not yet come for your tender mercies, for she is at variance with her Maker. I told her so, *word for word,* and more than that; for I said Miss Mary would never want her notice. She will remember me, I'll be sworn!"—My sister was touched, though troubled, by this well-meant zeal, whilst I only felt its justice. Two or three days passed, when the now rapidly declining

object of my tenderness gave me a packet directed to Miss Flint. "Promise me," said she, "to deliver this into Lucretia's hand; it is become indispensibly necessary that she should know I neither meant to wound her feelings, nor to exasperate her temper. I conjure you to promise me."—"Were she guarded by a legion of devils," exclaimed I, yielding to the anguish which tore my soul, "she shall receive it from my hand into her own! She shall feel the misery which she has caused!"—"Remember, replied she, "that the probe which is not skillfully used must inflame. When you do meet her, remember *your mother!*"

Her death soon followed. I was frantic in my grief. My passions would not be opposed, and these brought the murderer of my comfort before me in a sister's form. I swore solemnly that she should witness the ruin the she had effected; and that I would drag her to Mary's

bed of death. These violent agitations subsided to a more collected and determined purpose of thought. I was incapable of receiving Greenwood's arguments, and I was soothed by being left to my design. Greenwood performed the last sad office. Preparations were made for receiving the remains of Mrs. Howard, for the purpose of interment at his church, where her husband was buried; but the hearse and coach stopped short of the hall. Following the coffin I proceeded on foot to the great gate of the house; and, bidding the bearers stop, I rang the bell with fury. A man-servant answered my hasty summons; and, appalled by the object in view, he stood motionless before me. "Tell Miss Flint," said I, "that I must see her; that I am the bearer of a commission from the *dead*, and that I will be numbered with the *dead* before I leave this spot if she refuses to admit me." Some

little time elapsed: I was admitted; and the trembling heiress, surrounded by her maid-servants, and protected by Mr. Flamall, with terror met my slow approach. Flamall broke the silence. He asked me what I had to say to Miss Flint. I waved my hand. "Be wise!" said I, "this is no time for you."—He took the advice and shrunk from my eye. I presented the packet to Lucretia; she attempted to retreat on seeing the address. "You must take it," said I calmly: "nay, more, Lucretia, you must read the contents in my presence: such are my orders; and before my Maker, have I sworn to fulfil them."—"Give it to some one," cried she, covering her face; "I promise to read it when I am able."—"That will not suffice," replied I, sitting down and bursting into agonizing tears; "I have no apprehensions: a sister's dying blessing cannot injure, a sister's forgiveness cannot wound you."

She took the packet, broke the seals, and, hastily glancing her eyes over the two letters it contained, asked me, with rising anger, "whether I was satisfied with having insulted her under her *own roof?*"—Call it as you please," answered I, sternly; "my business was not to compliment. I leave you with a remedy you need. Profit from it, lest a worse thing befal you than my insults." I instantly left her; and on my sainted Mary's grave wept my feelings down to composure, Time, and my remaining comforts, healed, to a certain degree, these breaches in my peace. I was at length summoned to town with young Heartley, by his friend, to prepare for his voyage to Calcutta. A month was employed in my cares for Heartley's son, and my gratitude had its turn. I saw him embark with all the sanguine hopes of youth, qualified by my care, for an honourable destination; and gifted by

nature with every virtuous and noble trait of his father's character. He was under the protection of a man who loved that father, and I contentedly went back to my lodgings in order to prepare for my return home. My demands on my banker had been extended beyond their usual course; and I had to settle my account with his books before my departure. I called at his house, it had stopped payment; and in a week or ten days detention in town I learned, that I might expect for the remaining sum of five hundred pounds in his hands, a dividend of "five shillings in the pound."

Mrs. Heartley was informed of this event by her London correspondents. My philosophy did not console her; but it was shared by the Wilsons, who observed "That the captain was quite in the right not to fret about it, for that his comforts were in no danger of a bankruptcy."—From this time my influence with them

"It was my duty to resign her."—"It was incumbent on all to submit to necessity."—"It was Mary's future support to have an interest with her aunt, and she could not fail in humanizing her."—"By a refusal I was hardening her heart, and perpetuating enmity."—You will distinguish the different speakers. Greenwood's argument prevailed; for they breathed peace and love, and reformation and pardon. I submitted, Miss Cowley, and conducted my harmless, sweet child, to her unfeeling aunt; and I became a weekly visitor at the hall. Surprised by her not coming to see her deserted friends, I questioned her on the cause of her omission. "It will be only for a time," replied she, in a caressing tone, "we must have patience. My aunt fancies I shall not love her if I visit my dear friends. It is unlucky that she should so much dislike them; but I write to my Alice, and that is a comfort. When my

aunt perceives thas I am obedient to her commands in this no little trial of my patience, she will be more indulgent; in the mean time I am perfectly contented with my situation, and you shall see that she will love me." Mrs. Heartley approved of Mary's conduct, adding "Miss Howard must subdue that inflexible woman, or she is lost to all hope."

You have seen the result! You have witnessed her aunt's obduracy! I accept, with gratitude, your offered protection. Heaven has given you the means, and a mind worthy of the donor! The time may not be far remote when this destitute young woman will present herself before you, weak in her youth, in her beauty, and in her purity. Shelter her, Madam; the work will be honourable, and the recompence beyond what my most fervent prayers of gratitude can reach.

I remain respectfully,
Your obliged humble servant,

PERCIVAL FLINT.

P. S. I had intended to suppress one instance of the power of passion over a mind unchecked by reason or religion. You will be tempted to think it insanity. It might be as well could I *think thus.*

On Mr. Howard's bringing his wife to Wilson's, Miss Flint, in transports of fury, flew to the apartment in which hung my mother's picture, and with a hand animated by an implacable ferocity, she cut and defaced the cherub face, which was its beauty. My sister Howard, who was ignorant of this impotent act of revenge, often wished for this picture; and I employed Malcolm's good offices with his brother Philip to gain it. By this means I learned the incident, and consequently diverted my sister's direct application from being made.

CHAP. VII.

LETTER XX.

From Miss Cowley to Miss Hardcastle.

YOU will be prepared, my Lucy, for the resolution I have formed, of supplying to Miss Howard the loss of her parents, as far as I am able; to defeat the malice of her oppressor is a motive which I reject with disdain, as incompatible with my present state of mind. She shall be protected, Lucy, from better principles of action; and protected, as Mr. and Mrs. Howard's child ought to be protected. But I am not altogether satisfied with her remaining under the care of

her good uncle. I wish to prepare her for a situation under the roof of her sister Rachel Cowley, when with the name of Hardcastle I shall be qualified to act as a mother to her. She would by remaining at the Abbey be precluded from those improvements she needs for the world; and Mrs. Heartley, whom I have consulted, is of my opinion, that her mind might be strengthened and benefited by being placed more remote from Tarefield, and the extreme tenderness of the Wilsons. She must, whilst with them, experience an attention which tends to confirm the habits of dependance, and to increase the natural timidity of her mind. But I wish to see Mary Howard my equal and friend. Let me have your opinion on this point; consult my dear father. Ask him whether his Rachel Cowley is right in her judgment, — that, with a simplicity which knoweth no evil, and a humility which

needs encouragement, something more than the cultivation of the good affections is necessary, in order to meet the world. Mary, at the Abbey, will be made too *good* for an acquaintance with it; and I wish her sphere of knowledge to be enlarged; yet I am aware of the hazard of entrusting her innocence and beauty the care of strangers; nor would the captain concur in such a plan. I am much perplexed on this point: my views being to produce Miss Howard as she *ought* to be produced, and as her future provision will render necessary. You know me, Lucy; and you will not call the present object of my attention one unworthy of my principles, or unsuitable to my abilities. "I am an enthusiast," it will be said. This has been said a thousand and a thousand times by a cold-hearted apathy, which sees nothing beyond its own forlorn limits, and in its dread of deviating from that narrow path,

rests stationary there, till its powers of action are irrecoverably torpid. Peace be with such! Rachel Cowley is contented to be an *enthusiast*, and still, "like the needle true," will she turn "at the touch of joy and woe;" though "in turning she trembles too."

I shall expect to have your advice on this subject; being resolved to be governed by a discretion which has never failed to guide safely.

LETTER XXI.

From the same to the same.

I HAVE somewhere read that wonder is the child of ignorance; it was fortunate for me that I recollected this sage remark, for I was in danger of oversetting it, by wondering without being ignorant. Have I ever yet seen Mr. Hardcastle act like a wise and prudent man during my whole life, except in one me-

lancholy instance? And yet, Lucy, the *folly* and *extravagance* of his letter to Captain Flint produced so sudden an impression of surprise on my mind, that experience was confounded; and I exclaimed to Mrs. Allen, "Who could have believed *this*, even of Mr. Hardcastle!" On reflecting more deliberately on this proof of his inveterate opposition to all that is *proper* and *suitable*, I find however a consistency in his eccentricities, which might have secured me from *wondering*. After having laboured in meliorating a stubborn and unfruitful soil, he has taken the fancy to shew his skill in the flower garden, and to please his taste by cultivating the sweeter blossoms of a more genial spring, and a more productive mould. Peace be with him! His work is worthy of his hand! Under his culture will Mary Howard shed her mild fragrance around, and, secure from nipping colds or wintry blasts, she will, with

amaranthine bloom, cheer and delight his bosom! And you, my Lucy, "will be cheered by a companion your friend loves." These are your words. What shall I say to you in return? *Nothing.* Let Mary speak my thanks, whilst I bless Heaven for permitting me to be the means of sheltering innocence, and communicating to others the happiness I have enjoyed. I must nevertheless check my gratitude, in order to tell you, and this *unaccountable* Mr. Hardcastle, that I mean in future, to decline the honour of being the bearer of letters, which turn honest people's heads giddy. I am aware, that my own would not better sustain me, on the sight of *some* signed Hardcastle, than the poor captain's has sustained him; this, however, escaped your good father's consideration, so let it pass; whilst I proceed to inform you, that "gold may be bought too dearly," and that my nerves are not strong enough for *heavenly delights.* We are, however,

somewhat more settled into mortal cares; and the captain, I presume, will, in his letter, find room to tell you when you may look for your guests. We have now something else to *do;* and which is *doing* with April faces. Mary is so busy that she does nothing. I am asked over and over again, "whether Miss Hardcastle will not think she dresses too much for a young creature in her condition of fortune; whether, I think Miss Hardcastle will not find her aukward for her age." Then comes hope, to dispel her doubts and fears. "If she should please, if Miss Hardcastle should take a fancy to her as I had done, how happy would be her lot! Her dear uncle's heart would be at rest, and she in a course of improvement!" Why do I write all this to you? Alas! I cannot impose on you. It is not Rachel Cowley that is preparing to set out for Heathcot; and I must weep, and envy.

I will not go to the Abbey to-morrow: what have I to do with trunks and band-boxes destined for your abode! No, I will not go near them! Pity me, my dear Lucy! Tell me that your good uncle has produced some change in your father's inflexible resolutions. Mr. Freeman is a wise man, although he loves my poor Horace so tenderly. Surely he might convince Mr. Hardcastle without invading on the prerogatives of the immortal Newton, that no material injury would be done to the planetary system by our writing to each other! He might go farther, and safely predict, that our marriage would not hasten a single comet. No extraordinary thunders would announce to the world, that happiness had triumphed over cent. per cent. and over certain scruples, unheard of by multitudes, and which multitudes would laugh at. Urge him to try his utmost eloquence in favour of an union of pure and

unmixed affection. Can there exist a reason for the cruel separation to which we are doomed? I have no father to offend now; none to implore, but Mr. Hardcastle! Pity your

RACHEL COWLEY!

LETTER XXII.

From the same to the same.

YOU bid me hope for every thing that can relieve my spirits from their present oppression; and again you repeat, that Horace cannot have a better advocate than his uncle; yet, my Lucy, I am as weak as an infant. Why am I not permitted to accompany Captain Flint and Mary to Heathcot? I would return to my captivity with patience, could I but see *this Mr. Freeman;* it would satisfy me: no one here would oppose my journey. Oh! that cruel and too

firm spirit may be trusted. Mr. Flamall's ward will not be seduced,—will not be inveigled by Mr. Hardcastle—his son is nothing to him! Malcolm gave me last night a note from Mary, "believing that Miss Cowley can effect *every thing*." *So it appears.* She and the captain intreat her to employ her influence with Sir Murdock and Lady Maclairn to favour them with a visit at the Abbey; or to permit Mary to pay her respects at the hall before her departure. Unwilling to disturb the baronet, or to distress his lady, I mentioned Mary's note to her only. She requested me to assure Miss Howard that she sincerely participated with her best friends, in the satisfaction they felt, on the subject of her absence. "Her removal from Mrs. Wilson's," added she, "will do more, I trust, than the captain thinks, towards conciliating her aunt's mind; but independently of this consideration, the advantages she will

derive from her situation with Miss Hardcastle, are obvious; and I rejoice at her good fortune. It grieves me to refuse Captain Flint's invitation," continued she; "but the implacable animosity which his sister entertains for the whole family at the Abbey, has been hurtful to Mary's interest. I cannot, without injury to that interest, and exasperating Miss Flint, lose sight of the neutrality I have hitherto maintained. I wish you to give this sweet girl every assurance of my regard and esteem: tell her, Miss Cowley, that I never was her parents' enemy, nor am I capable of being hers. She must not come hither, unless her aunt consent to see her. Say nothing of this application to Sir Murdock. He will attend you as usual. It is utterly beyond my power to act otherwise than I do." Her eyes filled with tears, and to conceal them, she hastily quitted me,

saying, that Miss Flint had not sent for her, being too ill to rise.

If I am to believe Mrs. Allen, this "poor woman" is hourly manifesting a better frame of mind; but I am under a fit of the spleen, and want faith for her charity. I am disposed to think that horsewhipping, like Doctor Lob's muscular exercise, or the dumb bells, might have been useful to her constitution. Why may not evil spirits be dislodged, in the same way that certain peccant humours go off, by perspiration? If I thought the remedy a specific for discontent, I would try its efficacy, provided the prescription admitted of a whipping-post, instead of my own *bosom*, or one as white and as soft as the cygnet's down.

I am just returned from Miss Flint's room; her civility supports me in my theory. She insists on my using the coach as my own. "The weather will

not do for an open carriage, and I ought to be careful of my health." Poor woman! on saying this, she exhibited the havoc which sickness has made of late in her robust frame. She looks dreadfully; is much fallen away; and is nearly confined to her bed-room. She mentioned her niece's journey; said she was glad to hear she was going from Wilson's, and thanked me for my recommendation of her to you, adding, "that Mary could be useful when it pleased her, having a *pretty taste* and a *quick hand*." Suppose you commission me to purchase for you the unfinished cross-stitch carpet; as needle-work of this sort goes on with you, it will employ Mary very well for seven years; and by that time the Turkey carpeting in Sedley's study, will be the worse for wear. You will think, no doubt, of availing yourself of this "quick hand" in some way or other.

To-morrow, yes, to-morrow, I dine

with Miss Howard. Her friends will be collected for the special purpose of taking leave; wishing her a pleasant journey, with such like *ceremonies:* I have escaped the word *fooleries!* so much in honour of my self-command. But is it not nonsense, to wish people a pleasant journey who are going to Heathcot? Oh! how much good would it do me, only to behold the direction-post that points out "Heathcot-farm," and that is within one little mile of Lucy. Not a word more will I add in this froward humour; but still subscribe myself

Your own

R. COWLEY!

LETTER XXIII.

From the same to the same.

"You shall expect a letter by Miss Howard." Well, I will try, and con-

vince my dear girl that I am not a simpleton, whose philosophy resembles the feather in her hat, discomfited by a falling shower, or a rough blast. I will be your Rachel Cowley, although no longer your *Beatrix*.

I was pleased on Thursday morning to find that my good baronet had not finally renounced all "the pomps and vanities of this wicked world;" being convinced that in a moderate use of them, he will be in less danger of corruption, than many who think sackcloth and ashes the only guards to keep off temptation. He entered the music-parlour, in which Mrs. Allen and myself were prepared for the carriage, with an erect air, and as I thought a firmer step than usual, to ask when the coach should draw up. He wore his bridal suit, somewhat modernized; an embroidered waistcoat, and, as Mrs. Allen and myself both believe, a rich diamond stock buckle; a new hat,

and a gold-headed cane. We made no remarks on his finery; he prevented it, by instantly adverting to my robe, which was the one we embroidered together; and paid it many compliments. Mrs. Allen observed, that her grey silk gown and black bonnet would disgrace the well-dressed party. "No," replied he, with easy politeness, "that can never happen, till you keep bad company. Wisdom acknowledges her children under any attire; and sober matron grace is your ornament. But Malcolm means to leave his boots behind him, and begs a corner in the carriage with us," added he, taking a pinch of snuff from a superb gold box; "I am not sorry to see him now and then lay aside the *farmer* for the *gentleman*, as of the latter class he may always be, though of the former, without sinking his character; whereas, I have seen farmers, and rich ones, who were not, nor could be *gentlemen*."

Malcolm's entrance and dress produced the consequences to be drawn from Sir Murdock's inferences. He smiled on him with complacence, and said, "Why, now, indeed, you look like a *lover*, and *a Maclairn!*"—"When I forget what either of those titles claim," replied he, gaily, "hang a calf skin on my recreant limbs."

Thus attired we reached the Abbey. The captain in his best regimentals was prepared to receive his guests; and leaving the baronet to survey at his pleasure, those stationary friends which lined the room, Mrs. Allen and myself went to Mrs. Heartley's. Mrs. Wilson was with her; the girls were with Malcolm in the garden, and in our view. "Poor Miss Heartley will sadly miss her friend," observed the good woman, looking attentively on them as they walked leaning on Malcolm's arm. "It might have been as well for *us* had Miss Howard not passed

the last month here, as it must make parting with her more hard." I spoke of my Lucy. "I have no doubts of her being happy," replied Mrs. Wilson, "and I know she will be respected, and improved in her learning, as Mr. Howard's daughter ought to be; but as to her comforts with us, they have been always our blessings. To be sure, we could not introduce her as you will do; but otherwise——But, if she be happy? Yet, as my husband and I have told the captain hundreds of times, there was no reason for his troubles on Mary's account. Thank God, we have enough for her and ourselves too, and, though we have relations to maintain, we never grudged them assistance, and surely we had a right to be happy in our turn. But I saw how it was," added she, wiping her eyes, "when the innocent lamb was sent to that savage aunt; the captain thought I should love her too well to please my husband's

nieces. Dear me! duty and affection will not always march side by side! They were not born in my house, I never dandled them on my knees, nor saw them frisking before me! yet I do not forget them, they are *relations*. But this child!" —She wept.—"I beg your pardon, Miss Cowley, but I cannot help being sorry that she is going from us." I consoled her with the assurance that her absence would not be many months; and mentioned my hope of seeing you under her roof, as much a favourite as Mary. "So Mrs. Heartley tells me," replied she rising; "but in the mean time what is become of our young folks. They do not consider how cold it is turned." She disappeared in order to give them the caution. "How little do those understand the genuine goodness of human nature," said Mrs. Heartley, following with her eyes the retreating Mrs. Wilson, "who maintain, that it is indebted to

acquired attainments and borrowed lustre for its excellence and stability! No one can estimate the advantages of a good education more highly than myself; but there are some of our fellow-creatures, so richly endowed with virtuous propensities, that they appear to me to be peculiarly marked, in order to humble the pride of human reason; and to exhibit virtue in her native dignity and simplicity. What system of education, or what refinements of the polite world, could have better taught this woman the art of conferring benefits without oppressing the receiver, than her own heart, and the precepts in the gospel. That which thousands in the world would consider as a work of supererogation and superlative merit, she is firmly persuaded, is doing no more than what Mr. and Mrs. Howard's child has a right to exact, because they were good and unfortunate; and she left an orphan under her roof,

She has not a doubt of her being answerable for this young creature's comforts; and her regret on losing sight of her, is by no means unmixed with the fear, lest some mischief should arise from her acquaintance with the world. We have happily succeeded in satisfying her on this point; and she blesses God, that Miss Mary is not likely to see *London*. I am frequently so struck by this good woman's purity of heart, and sound principles of action," continued Mrs. Heartley, "that I am in some danger of despising too much the philosophy and refinements of the world. I cannot help believing, that, whilst immersed in its cares and its pleasures, not only my enjoyments were more controuled, but my heart less pure than it is at present. My ambition, which then looked forwards to the well-earned recompence of my husband's toils, and the honourable establishment of my children in that class to

which their parents had a claim, is now settled into the wish of seeing Alice a good wife, and a farmer's wife: and I should be contented to leave her with the qualities of a Mrs. Wilson, and in the protection of a man like Wilson."

"A little refinement," answered I, with an arch smile, "will not spoil your plan of rural innocence and peace. Malcolm may work as industriously as Mr. Wilson, notwithstanding his wicked taste for Virgil and Theocritus; and it will be Alice's own fault, should she neglect the churn for the harpsichord."—"Rather say, her foolish mother's," replied she, laughing, "who, in spite of her convictions, could not leave her bad habits with the world she quitted. However," continued she, "I can give you no stronger proof of being a sincere proselyte to the opinions I have supported, than in the disposal of my daughter. On this important point I have so far devi-

ated from the prescribed rules of parental prudence, as to hazard the censure of weakness, if not indiscretion, in permitting a girl who has no fortune, to engage herself in a promise of marriage to a man nearly as little favoured as herself in this essential article. It may not be amiss," continued she, laughing, "to endeavour to justify my conduct on this particular head, with *one* so rigidly attached to the doctrine of the 'suitable,' 'convenient,' and 'equal bargain' in this grand business of human life. The truth was, I had no alternative in the question concerning the happiness of my child. I foresaw, that circumstanced as she was, Malcolm Maclairn would either remain a second brother, or become her lover. There was no inequality of condition or of character, to oppose to their growing attachment; both were virtuous and amiable; both had the same moderate expectations; both had been educated for

a decent mediocrity, I wrote to Lady Maclairn my *observations*, not my *fears;* for I had none. Malcolm's visits were not restrained. I considered, Miss Cowley, that worldly prudence was not without its victims; that human wisdom was not unfrequently frustrated, and that an anxious eye to the future often overshot its mark. In the dread of poverty we sometimes forget to appreciate justly the barriers which talents, industry, and sobriety can oppose to its encroachments, and still more heedlessly, turn from the numberless examples, in which wealth, with the habits it induces, has been the high road to penury. Malcolm is a practical farmer; and from the application of better opportunities, and superior talents, he has enlarged Mr. Wilson's agricultural knowledge, who calls him 'his master.' Malcolm was not sixteen when I warned his mother of his *danger*," continued Mrs. Heartley smiling; "since

his father has sanctioned his views, I have regarded him as my son. Fortunately, Alice's pedigree pleased the good baronet; and he told Malcolm, that with such an education as he described, and from so *honourable* a stock, any girl was rich to an independent and wise man. From that hour his plans have been brought forward; and when, by means of his friend Wilson's assistance, he can find a farm, my children will be happy. An advantageous project in order to effect this, is now before them; and I hope will turn out as profitably to Mr. Wilson, who is a sensible and prudent man, as to Mr. Maclairn: in the mean time he is contented with the privileges I allow him; and Alice calls me her friend and confidant, and is in no hurry to change her name."

A summons to the party below prevented more on this subject. But tell me, Lucy, what is your opinion of this

mother? I thought whilst I listened to her, that I was with *ours!* I found Mrs. Wilson presiding at the head of Captain Flint's table. The *feast*, for such it was, was in her parlour. A noble room, with a dark wainscoat, and a profusion of carving, gave dignity to the repast, and also a contrast peculiarly striking to the appearance of the guests; for we ought to have been dressed in farthingales and Queen Bess's ruffs; and the donor of the feast, as we suspect, to have had pages and gentlemen ushers. Simplicity, gaiety, and ease, supplied the place of ancient ceremonials; and I could not help recalling, in remarking the modest but independent farmer Wilson, the times of vassalage, when pride and abject submission bound the human race in the fetters of ignorance. Mrs. Allen, who appeared to be particularly Mrs. Wilson's favourite of the day, assures me, that I am forgiven for my wicked-

ness in sending Mary from the Abbey. Miss Hardcastle's character has effected this lenity on Mrs. Wilson's part. "Her gentleness is exactly the thing; for to Mary Howard, *gentleness* is meat, drink, and clothing. She hopes Miss Hardcastle will attend to the *little cough*, which from time to time alarms her fears, Mary's dear parents having died of consumptions; but then indeed these were brought on by sorrow and the barbarity of the wicked. Miss Howard will have no such troubles; yet she has given her the recipe for the cough, which was always useful. How so tender a creature got through her hardship at the hall is beyond her conception! It appears to her a miracle! She who never went to bed or rose without a fire in her room, and who was reared like a *cot-lamb!*" Mrs. Allen received these hints with due attention, and with good-natured seriousness told her, that she had only one

fear to combat with, namely, that Mary would be still too much the *cotted-lamb at Heathcot*. She smiled, and nodding her honest and contented head, answered, "That is well: she will never be spoiled by nursing, as they are, poor fools!"

Malcolm waits for my letter. He sleeps at the Abbey in order to accompany the travellers one stage. I have written a note to Mary, in which I have inclosed a bank note of fifty pounds, and in the most dictatorial language of an *elder sister*, recommended to her care the escort which Providence has given her to her new abode. I could not take leave of this dear girl; it is better as I have managed matters; nor shall I go to the Abbey to-morrow. Malcolm shall have the triumph of consoling the simpletons there; I have enough to do, to make reasonable your

RACHEL COWLEY.

CHAP VIII.

LETTER XXIV.

From Rachel Cowley to Miss Hardcastle.

IT has fallen out exactly as Mrs. Allen predicted: my restlessness has done no more than to weary my body; my mind travels to you, and I must humour it. We will not talk however of those, who, with palpitating hearts, are, as they journey on, thinking of their first reception, and the embarrassments of an introduction to beings of an higher order than such poor mortals as croud this busy scene. How I should enjoy your defeat, Lucy, when your eyes, for the first time, behold "My fairest amongst women,"

an epithet you have so unmercifully rallied. You will be candid, and I shall forgive you; only in future acknowledge that I can praise *accurately*, and, in this instance, have praised *soberly*. It is an age since I have examined my talents in this way; but so confident am I that the sight of Miss Howard and her uncle will establish my excellence as a painter, whose hand is guided by truth and nature, that I fearlessly send you two other portraits, which ought long since to have graced your cabinet. I wish Sedley was thirty years older than he is, it would save me the time necessary to delineate not only the features, but the character of Mr. Greenwood, who,

> "In manners gentle, in affection mild,
> In wit a man, simplicity a child,"

brings to my fancy what Sedley will be when a grandfather, and whom I already reverence as one every time Mr. Green-

wood speaks. They certainly are near relations; only nature, always provident as well as kind in her donations, thought that one at a time would be sufficient for her honour; and one in a country enough to allure mankind to a love of goodness and simplicity of heart. One trait which they possess in common, convinces me that my hypothesis is not altogether fallacious; for I dare not be saucy with either, though I love them both. You who are deeper than myself in metaphysics, will descover the cause for my respect and good behaviour with them, when, with others, "my lips utter folly," and I am as "a bubbling brook."

Doctor Douglas is the delight of my eyes, and, like Falstaff, not only witty himself, but the cause of wit in me; and although it may not be Attic salt to all palates, it supplies a seasoning necessary to my hard fare. Douglas is a true and and genuine North-Britain, large, muscu-

lar, and six feet at least in height. is by no means a beau; nor is he a ven, although he looks more lik London watchman than a physician. dress is the result of system, raised bably upon his early modes of attire, abhorrence of ligatures. Cold bat and Bath-coating, a sort of cloth, as your curricle wrapping-coat, are him the essentials health and lon ty; and he maintains, that with t and Scotch barley, a man needs either a carriage, a carpet, turtle crutches, or an apothecary. He is dower, Lucy, and has too great whom he has rendered, as I am tol himself, fit for any climate, and to to be contented with even *barley* and a knapsack. A healthy counten and eyes which still sparkle with th gour of his mind, would deceive you age, for he is more than three-score b register; but the loss of two or thr

his fore teeth, are mementos that his youth is past. These several defects and impediments have preserved me from the sin of inconstancy; for I was in danger of admiring, for the first time in my life that I can recollect, one of those figures which you would expect to find at the head of a banditti, in the scenery of a Salvator Rosa. After dinner Mr. Greenwood, observing him making his dessert of a piece of sea-biscuit, which he took from his pocket, could not help expressing his surprise, that he should hazard the loss of such teeth as he envied. "I have every grinder," replied he, "as sound as when Nature gave them me."— "Of this fact I needed no better evidence," answered Mr. Greenwood, "than the seeing you grind that flinty biscuit; but I conceive you might have been taught, by the loss of two or three of your foreteeth, to understand that yours, like your neighbour's, were perishable."— "Why

does he not get them supplied?" cried Alice; "they make false teeth now, I am told, of a substance as white and as firm as his own."—"Why do you not plaister over that honest and honourable testimony of your having faced your enemy, Captain Flint?" asked he, with gravity. "The girls like a smooth, though empty front."—"Oh, that is pure malice!" replied Alice, "Captain Flint's scar is his glory, and was acquired in fighting for his country."—"Well, hussey," retorted he, "and mine was gained in buffetting with the stormy surge; and saving from its overwhelming fury *twa bonnie lasses.* I could not make more arms than I had, and one steered the float, the other grasped one of the sinking wretches, and my teeth I gave to the second; and shall I not wear my laurels in rememberance of my prowess, without cramming my mouth with sea-horse teeth and vile springs?"—"You are quite right, doctor,"

remarked I; "and what is more, they would, like every thing artificial about you, be disgraced by the gifts of Nature. You can bite close enough with the teeth you have, whilst a fool and a sea-rusk cost you so little to reduce them to dust." He laughed, and displayed from ear to ear, the snowy white and even teeth; not of Lucy Hardcastle's sort, because one would make four of her pearls, but yet as well adapted to the mouth they reside in. So much for the doctor's teeth; now for his humour. Some one asked him whether he had lately seen a certain Sir Peregrine Lofley, a gentleman of consequence somewhere in the neighbourhood. "No," replied he, with a peculiar expression of contempt. "He has not had the cholic of late; and when he has, he will not apply to the *Scotch quack* for physic; he found mine unpalatable."—"How did that happen?" asked Mr. Greenwood; "when I last saw Sir

Peregrine he told me you had saved his life, and that the London physicians were fit only to beat your pestle and mortar."—"That opinion speaks the fool," answered he; "but neither the Scotch nor English physicians can cure him of a radical want of brains. You saw him three or four days after I had accomplished the same business which they had done more than once; the only difference consisted in the mode. This fellow," continued he, turning to Sir Murdock, "had, by his gluttony, produced a malady, which, without a miracle, might have killed him in twenty hours; and having heard of '*one Douglas*,' who had saved a man from a mortification of the bowels, I was sent for. The danger of Sir Peregrine was not less imminent, but happily yielded to medicine. Perfectly knowing the cause of the malady, I became the friend of nature and of him; and for a few days longer

than was absolutely necessary, kept him on a very spare diet. He had been terrified into docility, and, on enlarging his bill of fare, I honestly told him, that his health was in his own hands; that temperance would preserve it, and that excess in eating would shorten his life. From this well-meant caution he drew an inference perfectly useless. He would eat nothing that Doctor Douglas did not order; and during the course of a fortnight I received my fee, for directing his cook to boil his mutton and make his panada. I saw the machine was going on well; and, without farther concern, took his superfluous gold for advice and controul so beneficial to him. Not, however, classing him with my sick patients, I one morning omitted my visit. The following evening as I called on passing his door, I was questioned on the cause of *my neglect*. He had expected me in the morning. 'I had a great desire for a

stewed carp for my dinner,' added he, with a disturbed air, 'but I did not dare to eat of it without your permission.'— 'It is not my intention, my good Sir,' replied I, to play *le docteur Pedro Rezio* with you: with the constitution and appetite of *le governeur Sancho Panca*, all things are lawful with one sauce, moderation and exercise. Eat like a ploughman if it please you, on condition you work like one.' He graciously smiled, and said he would try what he could do when stronger. I now mentioned the melancholy accident which had engaged me the whole of the day. A man working on the roof-beams of a house had fallen; he had broken his thigh, and, as it was supposed, had fractured his head. It appeared that this unfortunate man had been Sir Peregrine's carpenter, but had incurred his sore displeasure by two offences equally unpardonable. The first was, refusing him his vote for the candi-

date he supported; the second, the man could read; and with this dangerous talent he had discovered, that he was not altogether a piece of elm or oak. 'And was it for this fellow, doctor, that Sir Peregrine Lofley was neglected?' said he, rising from an easy-chair, with much resentment; 'surely you must know that he is a notorious Jacobin! a rascal who reads newspapers and seditious tracts, at alehouses; and prates of magna-charta and the liberty of the press! He is the veriest dog in the neighbourhood a common nuisance! Surely you must have known this!'—'I was perfectly acquainted with the man's *reputed* character,' answered I, drily; 'but I was called upon to judge of his *fractured skull*, not of his *political creed*. It happens, however, fortunately for my hopes of saving his life, which is not unuseful to his wife and six children, that he has loved politics better than ale: the remarkable sobriety

of his habits is much in his favour, and I hope to conquer the fever. You must not expect me to call to-morrow, I shall be engaged with him.'—'It will not suit me,' answered he, with evident haughtiness, 'to place my health in any man's hands, on whom I cannot depend for *punctuality* as well as *judgment*; and I should conceive that Doctor Douglas has had no reason to complain of my want of attention to his visits.' He offered his guinea: I declined it. 'This was a call *en passant*,' observed I, 'but it has led to an explanation of your expectations. These, Sir Peregrine, may, on certain occasions, be regarded by me, as not less *incumbent* on your medical attendant's observance, than they appear useless at this moment. *All are men*, without distinction, on my list of patients; the urgency of the case settles their precedence. You want not medical aid at present; nor do I want your gui-

neas, in return 'for small talk and bowing,' although born on the other side of the Tweed.' I left him swelling with rage, and have never seen him since; and finding that I am neither a democrat, nor a nuisance, he calls me a '*pretending quack!*'—"And yet," observed the delighted Sir Murdock, "the united suffrages of every university in Europe could not have better qualified a man for the purposes of healing the sick. Your remedies must be infallible, doctor, if you can prescribe to other diseases as well as you have done to pride and narrowness of spirit."—"The patient was heartily welcome to it," replied he, with invincible gravity. "I am not an ill-natured man, Sir Murdock, and when a good action of this sort falls in my way I conceive it to be my duty to be useful. It is true that my nostrums, on such occasions, are like most of my unlicensed brethren's, more *rough* than *infallible*; but I am more

generous than the common herd of venders of this class; I give my pill and bolus gratis to all who apply for them."

"I wish I could give you a special diploma, Douglas, for prescribing your physic to those who do not ask for it," observed the mild Greenwood; "you might find plenty of patients, who, not thinking 'they need a physician, become incurable by neglect."—"Is not that your fault," asked he, smiling; "you are too tender and compassionate. The diet you prescribe of self-knowledge and self-discipline, will not do for all constitutions. Some need *caustics* and the *probe*, and with such patients will Douglas exercise his functions without interfering in your trade." The good doctor had, however, as I thought, been rather too tender of a foible of his own. His national prejudices had not been pruned. "Scotland was the genial soil of philosophy, courage, and honour." The conversation

took, from some assertions of this sort, an argumentative form. Malcolm with delight listened to his father's eloquence. Stimulated by his opponents, Mr. Greenwood and the captain, and supporting Douglas's arguments, he forgot the past; and brought forth his long-concealed stories of knowledge, with an animation which marked the acuteness of his mind and the strength of his memory.

Wherefore is it, my dear Lucy, that so many are found who, in the pride of reason, appear to forget the feeble tenure on which depends their boasted privileges; their justly prized prerogatives? The pulsation of an artery more or less rapid than suits our fragile frame, may, in a moment suspend, and, for a time, annihilate those faculties that distinguish us from the brute that perishes. Are we not liable to diseases, to accidents, to sorrows, which no human skill can remedy, no human prudence can prevent,

and which, in a moment, may reduce us to idiots, or render us as ferocious and dangerous as beasts of prey? Suspend, but for a moment, the agency of that Being in "whom we live and move, and what are we? Surely there needed not the awful interdiction of eternal truth, to teach us, that "Pride was not made for man." Our own weakness, our own feebleness, might have sufficed to point out the lesson! You are fortunately released from a train of thoughts more useful to myself than needful to one who "bears her faculties so meekly." I am summoned to the card-table; Lady Maclairn requested me so earnestly to make up a rubber for *poor Lucretia*, that I cannot refuse her. There are sceptics to be found who deny that there is constancy in love. It would save much cavilling if these ingenious people would use proper terms. No one, I presume, would contradict them in their assertion,

that people cannot eat with such an appetite, or drink when not thirsty, as if they were hungry or thirsty; but leaving such to their ignorance, I will start a new subject of argument, for I will maintain that one cannot always *hate.* No, Lucy, irreconcilable hatred, like a raging fever, must either kill the patient or wear itself out. My cheek no longer flushes on seeing Miss Flint; nothing rises in my throat when I ask her how she passed the night. Are not these gracious signs, Lucy, that I am becoming truly your sister? You shake your dear head. Well, "Rome was not built in a day," says the proverb; and after all, can I help that people should reap that which they have sowed? Would you wish me to give to Miss Flint the tribute due to suffering virtue? and to think, with Mrs. Allen, that the wicked are more to be commiserated than the good? If you do you must give me time,

and in justice commend these dawnings of virtue; for I have, in consequence of my charity, been two days writing this, instead of one. Love me, Lucy; be sure to love me with all my faults. Nothing you can do for my benefit will so soon correct them.

I am impatient to hear what you think of "My lilley of the valley!" There! it is breathed! Take the dear blessing amongst you! and, oh! that I could add! take with it your

RACHEL COWLEY.

CHAP. IX.

DURING an interval of three or four weeks, the period during which Captain Flint was on his excursion to Heathcot, no occurences of importance to this history appear in Miss Cowley's letters to her friend. It is my duty to supply this chasm by detailing a few particulars relative to Mr. Horace Hardcastle's situation and pursuits, these being so immediately connected with the thread of the narrative as to claim attention.

The young nobleman, his friend, with whom he went abroad, continued gradually to yield to the slow, but fatal malady which had so long menaced the

hopes of his family. Intervals of comparative ease, with that flow of spirits which commonly attends this disease, and which was further sustained by his patience and principles, had, from time to time, beguiled him in the course of his unprofitable search after health. He became weary of the sea, and disgusted by the confinement of a ship's cabin; and he expressed much reluctance to quitting Lisbon, where he had wintered. His friends about him strongly recommended to him a retreat from the heat of the summer, which was within their reach, and the accustomed resort of the society to which he was attached and endeared. Doctor Innes, his tutor, convinced of the inutility of the many cruises he had patiently submitted to undertake, and the necessity of amusing his mind, immediately secured, in this delightful asylum, a convenient house for his reception, to which the family repaired in the early months of the summer.

The mutual confidence which subsisted between Lord William and Horace Hardcastle, was of that nature which precludes all concealment; and the dejection of the lover's spirits was not only a subject of disquietude to Lord William, but of anxiety to Doctor Innes. He was influenced, by the account given him of the young man's difficulties, to write to his uncle, Mr. Freeman; and, stating to him his fears for his nephew's health, he with much earnestness expatiated at large on the effects of a domineering passion. "I have, my good friend," added the doctor, "said thus much of Mr. Hardcastle's inclination, because I well know it was implanted, and is nourished, by the purest affections of his nature. Opposition will never destroy it; but it checks his activity, preys on his spirits, and may blast the hopes of his family. It is time his father should know this. Some indulgence is necessary, unless he means

to sacrifice his happiness to a point of honour." Alarmed by the seriousness of this application, Mr. Freeman determined to quit his beloved home, and to plead in person for the lovers; conceiving that Mr. Hardcastle would be more accessible to his remonstrances, when urged by an affection which had led him to think Horace a match for the first woman breathing, in point of merit. He was successful, or rather Doctor Innes's letter prevailed. The interdiction of writing was removed; and Horace was informed that he had only to be cheerful till Miss Cowley ceased to love; and to wait patiently for Counsellor Steadman's operations with the redoubtable Mr. Flamall. These letters, and the change of measures which Mr. Hardcastle had adopted, were carefully concealed from Miss Cowley. Horace had been mentioned as not only *depressed* but *indisposed*, and the confederacy who had jointly aided in

the victory over his good father, concurred with Miss Hardcastle that it was more prudent to leave Miss Cowley in repose, and to Horace the pleasure of telling his own tale. Mr. Freeman, contented with these advantages, and encouraged by Mr. Steadman's concurrence, with whom he had an interview in London, in his way to Heathcot, returned home. Captain Flint and Miss Howard's arrival immediately followed. Some conversation, relative to her beloved brother, led Miss Hardcastle to say to her guests, that she had been very unhappy from the time he had left England; "but Heaven be praised," added she, with unguarded warmth, "we shall be happy soon!"—"Do you expect your brother home?" asked the captain. "No, but he will be more comfortable than he has been abroad," answered she, with vivacity; "and it has been his dejection as much as his absence which have been

the subjects of my regret. Thank God! all goes well at present." She instantly checked herself, and changed the conversation.

The captain's return to Tarefield was followed by the letter before us.

LETTER XXV.

From Miss Cowley to Miss Hardcastle.

PRAY, Lucy, by what enchantment has it happened that Captain Flint, with the loss of his idolized niece, has also lost his care-worn face? How has it happened that in a mail-coach, and exposed to cold and fatigue, he has contrived to leave behind him his rheumatic pains and nervous head-achs? But our first interview gave me a nervous head-ach, and a nervous tremor into the bargain! for, after having, with the patience of Job

himself, listened to his rhapsodies in praise of all his ravished eyes had beheld at Heathcot; giving him his full swing in the history of the *concerts* at Worcester, and the *feasts* at the baron's, and the Chudleighs, &c. I did contrive to edge in: "and what did you hear them say of Horace?"—"Mr. Hardcastle," replied he, "walks every morning in the little plantation"—he shewed me the *children's oaks*—"raised from acorns of your setting. His son's have got the start of yours and Miss Hardcastle's?"—"Well, I know all this," answered I pettishly; "but did his father never speak of him to you?"—"He talks of him perpetually," replied he, "as every one does, and Miss Hardcastle appears to be quite reconciled to his absence, for she assured me, that he would be happier than he had been."—"Good God!" exclaimed I, "what could she mean!" Something in my *too honest* face betrayed me. "Be composed,

my dear Miss Cowley," said the terrified captain, "I am certain there is no cause for alarm, when Miss Hardcastle says '*all will be well:*' these were her words, in speaking of her brother." Judge, Lucy, of the effect of such ambiguous imformation on my irritable mind. "*All will be well*"—yes, *all will be well* when I am in my grave, if I am deserted and forgotten! Write to me; write only these three words, "Horace loves you," then *all will be well* with

R. COWLEY.

A SHORT letter from Miss Hardcastle indicating the success of Mr. Freeman's interference, without any mention of his apprehension on the subject of Horace's health, reached Miss Cowley by return of post. The subjoined letter will speak for itself.

LETTER XXVI.

Horace Hardcastle to his Sister.

Cintra, Sept. 20th.

MY DEAR LUCY,

My last letter informed you of our intention of remaining stationary for some months; and I have now the satisfaction of telling you, that I think Lord William has, on the whole, gained more from this climate than from any he has tried, and that hitherto we have had no reason to regret the plan we have adopted. An assured refuge from the heats of summer and the advantages hoped for from his vicinity to the sea, have not altogether failed. He has been amused, his thoughts divested from what he calls "a cowardly flight from death," and free from the inconveniences of Lisbon, he enjoys placidly, the few short days of

his allotted space. We have been constant residents in this terrestrial paradise only since the first of June. Our spacious house and elevated situation at Lisbon, being perfectly adapted to our dear invalid's comforts; and to say the truth, we quitted the view of the noblest harbour in Europe, with an intire persuasion, that we might have remained with safety under its protection and the the sea-breeze, which blew on our faces from every balcony. But Lord William had not then seen Cintra! He had not then seen from the *Cabo de Penak*, nor from *Cape Roque*, the sublime objects of nature which surround them. Rocks and mountains; the expanded ocean; the wide-stretching Tagus; plains rich in cultivation; impending woods; bubbling fountains, and falling cascades! Nor had he then traced the footsteps of havoc and confusion, left by the earthquake, and which the broken fragments and ponder-

ous masses of the bare rock, mark at every approach.—But recommending to my Lucy the names of those writers who have embellished their works with a description of this favoured haunt of nature, I will proceed to place before her an adventure much more interesting to myself. Twiss, Baretti, Southby's Tours through Spain and Portugal will satisfy your curiosity, as to the spot in which I met with my good genii. You will not wonder, that your brother seeks solitude. My Curro *, who knows his master for his friend, is no less impatient than he is, for the early dawn; about that hour he conducts me daily to some otherwise almost inaccessible haunt, and contentedly browzes the verdant paths in his way. The sun had gained upon us, whilst my Grison breakfasted on what nature made to him a luxurious repast. I

* Jackass.

conversed with an intelligent friar, one of the inmates of this singular retreat, who has been banished by the superior of his order to this place from his convent in Lisbon, to expiate the sin of loving *English heretics*, and English books; both of which temptations are yet too strong for him, in a spot

"Whose darksome round contains
"Repentant sighs and voluntary pains;
"The rugged rocks, which holy knees have worn,
"The grots and caverns shagg'd with horrid thorn."

But leaving these allusions and poetical flights, let us proceed in our usual way. —Slowly winding up the steep ascent we reached the ruins of a Moorish castle, which is on one of the three highest promontories. You will imagine that the prospect from this elevation is unconfined. Alas! my Lucy, your brother saw only *one!* It was clouded by despair, and rendered intolerable by the certainty that I was

not the only sufferer who was enveloped in its frowning aspect. "Were I alone to suffer, I would try to meet disappointment and contradiction like a man," thought I: "but to know that I am beloved, that I am as necessary to the happiness of the being whom I love, as she is to mine! To know that we might be happy, but for considerations——" I checked my murmurs *then*, as I suppress them *now;* and with my usual despondency, quitted the spot. In descending I saw, not far remote, an elegant girl, seated on a fragment of a rock; a gentleman on his knees before her, and she in evident distress. The narrow path admitted of no deviation; I was obliged to pass the supposed lovers. In so doing I perceived that the pretty creature had hurt her ankle, which the gentleman was rubbing; and the expression of her countenance, indicated that the application of his hand

had not allayed the sense of pain. I stopped, and learned, that fearful of trusting herself to the sagacious animal she had rode, she had left her party at the Cork convent*, preferring to walk. With a shoe of *this fashion*," added the gentleman producing a green satin slipper, which might have rivalled Cinderella's, "you will not be surprised at our disaster; the heel snapped, and here we are, with a sprained ancle! The *husband*, rather than the *lover*, appeared in this *observation;* and my idea was confirmed; for the pretty creature, rubbing the ancle with a hand which did not disgrace it, displayed a wedding ring; and with assumed gaiety, said, "The accident was nothing, she was certain the sprain was trifling; the pain was already subsiding, it was only numbed. If the gentleman would only have the

* A convent near Lisbon, so called from being built of the Cork-tree.

goodness to call as he passed the Convent, and send forward the beasts, all would be well." *The gentleman*, as in duty bound, assisted her in mounting his own; and with the utmost caution, we proceeded down to the village. Having safely gained the more easy road, our timid charge, unaffectedly thanked me for my goodness; and in reply to her companion's raillery on being such a coward, she remarked the superiority of the beast she was on, to the wretched animal they had lent her at the hotel; adding, that the satisfaction of leaving him feeding, was one motive for her preferring to walk. "I might have guessed as much," replied her companion; "but after all, my dear Margaret, you have been more charitable than fortunate. You should have kept your glass slipper for more level ground: it will be long enough before you see again a spot like this, or find a mountain to ascend."

—"That may be," answered she with cheerfulness, "but I shall have time to rest on ship-board." This observation led to my being informed that she was going with her *brother* to Jamaica, where her husband was expecting her. "It will be a long and a tedious time before we shall meet," added she with tenderness: "and when I think of the many hours of expectation!"——"Never fear!" cried the brother, "you are a good sailor, Margaret, and with fair winds we shall go quicker than we do at present."—"God grant us them!" replied she with emotion.

We reached the hotel, and I took my leave of the strangers. The following morning on passing it, civility prompted me to enquire after the sprained ancle. The brother gave me a favourable account of the accident, adding, that *Mrs. Flint*, his sister, would be happy to see me again; and instantly leading the way

to the next room, introduced me to his sister, and another lady whom I recollected as being the wife of a merchant resident in Lisbon. The name of *Flint* had visibly discomposed me; and for some moments I had only to listen to the reiterated acknowledgments of the delicate Mrs. Flint. She was still at the breakfast-table, and with the most perfect contentment she told me that her friend had not only enjoined her the penance of remaining in her bed longer, by some hours, than was her custom, but had doomed her to the sofa for the whole day; and with a sweet and amiable frankness of manner she reminded me of my little services; intreating me to assist her again, and by dining with them to make her peace with her brother, who had threatened to reduce her to a pigmy-height by obliging her to wear flat-heeled shoes. I bowed my acceptance of this invitation. The island of Jamaica and the

appellation of "Mrs. Flint" had rivetted me to my seat. At length I summoned up resolution to ask her, whether she was connected with the *Flints of Tarefield-hall*. She coloured deeply; and the brother, without hesitation, answered, that his sister was the wife of Mr. Philip Flint, the youngest son in the family. "Then you know Miss Cowley," said I trembling with agitation, "you know she is at Tarefield with Lady Maclairn?" —"Margaret knows little of her husband's family," answered he, "having always resided in Scotland." I was silenced, and a certain air of embarrassment was dispelled from Mrs. Flint's countenance by the lady's asking her brother, whether it was still his intention to leave Lisbon on the Saturday. He replied in the affirmative, allowing for winds and tides; then turning to me, he asked me to take a ramble in the gardens of Penah Verde. I complied; but on

sallying out we found the potent rays of the mid-day sun inconvenient; and allured by a fountain within two hundred paces of the hotel, we took our seats by it, under the umbrageous shelter of the cork and elm-trees.

I immediately began the conversation by apologizing for the warmth and earnestness of my interrogations relative to Tarefield; and proceeded to inform him of so much of Miss Cowley's history as was needful, in order to account for the interest I had discovered in relation to her. In the course of my little narrative, I spoke of Mr. Flamall, as having by his authority removed his ward from friends devoted to her, and to whom she was attached; and I added that, having learned from you the repugnance with which Miss Cowley had quitted her wonted asylum, I wish to know, that, with Lady Maclairn, her situation had

been such as she merited. "We know none of Philip's connections," answered he, carelessly lading the limpid water with a brass bason attached by a chain to the fountain; "but if Philip's mother resembles him, she must be worthy of the guest you have described; for he is a good and an *honest man*. For the rest of his relations, to give you my honest opinion of them, I do not believe they would give this cup of water towards the happiness of any one. As for his precious uncle Flamall, he is a complete scoundrel."—"Then you know him!" observed I, eagerly. "Yes, yes," answered he, with warmth, "I know him, and I trust he will know *Sinclair* before many months elapse. He will not be the first rascal this arm has chastised!"—"Would to God," cried I, "that mine could second you!" He smiled and observed, "He would recollect my wish, and that

it should strengthen his own." I now, my dear Lucy, more explicitly detailed to him Miss Cowley's connection with this villain: and if my own wretched anxieties appeared, I could not help it. He listened to me with the deepest attention, and grasping my hand, swore a solemn oath, to search to the bottom of a business so perfectly consonant to the man's character and conduct. "Hear my story, Mr. Hardcastle, and then judge whether your Miss Cowley's cause can be in better hands," added he, in an impressive tone. "I do not believe she would need a defender whilst an honest man can be found; but to me she shall be another sister, and with Margaret's injuries will I remember Miss Cowley's! My situation in life," continued he, "separated me from my mother soon after she became a widow; a maternal uncle, who lives at Boston in America,

having destined me to the same pursuits in life, from which he had risen to respectable opulence. I had quitted my father's study, who was a minister of the kirk of Scotland, some time before his decease; and under the favour of my good uncle had then risen nearly to my present station, to wit, commander of one of *his* ships, instead of one of my *own*, which is at present in this port. I was fortunately not too remote from my father for his last blessing and embrace. I had also the consolation to find, that my uncle was disposed to render my mother and sister comfortable; an attention peculiarly necessary in the low condition of my father's finances. I am eight or nine years older than Margaret, and, both in principles and affection, disposed to perform the relative duties of a father and a brother. Such were my sentiments when I left her, after the events which I

have mentioned, to return to America. During an absence of three years from my native home, I heard with contentment of my mother's tranquillity, and of the improvement of the poor little girl you have seen. She was, Mr. Hardcastle, my delight and pride from her cradle; and I knew that in my mother's care, her innocence was secure. This spring I had an opportunity I had long desired; and I failed not to avail myself of it to visit my mother. I was so pressed for time, and urged by impatience, that I arrived unexpectedly; and with some surprise I found that my mother had given up her house in Edinburgh, and lived near it, at a small village indicated to me. On reaching her abode, the cause of her removal was apparent in the emaciated form which poor Margaret exhibited. I was told she had been some months declining in health; and that country air

had been judged more favourable to her, than that of the town. We are no adepts at hypocrisy. My mother's agitations betrayed her. On my asking whether any love disappointment had laid the foundation of the illness, she burst into tears; and unable to contain the secret, told me the sorrows of her aching heart.

"My sister had for a playmate and friend an amiable girl, somewhat older than herself, of the name of Montrose. They were near neighbours, and their parents were in the habits of familiar and friendly intercourse. On the death of Mr. Montrose, his widow, unwilling to give up her house, received, but with extreme circumspection, boarders. Philip Flint was recommended to her by her usual adviser, an old friend of her husband and a professor in the college. The young man was particularly committed to his care, and as peculiarly formed

for the suitable inmate of a house remarkably sober and well regulated. Young Montrose was a pupil of the same gentleman, and had already distinguished himself for talents and application. I will abridge my romance, by telling you at once the result of his love advances to Margaret. Their measures were wonderfully prudent, when you take into the account the age of the lovers, who could only reckon eight or nine and thirty years between them; and those of their faithful and zealous confidants, who, in their calculation might have a right to four or five more. With the assistance of Montrose, they were married, and with the consummate prudence of an *old civilian* this young man saw, that the marriage was duly and legally valid, according to the laws of Scotland, his friend being anxiously solicitous on this point; pleading his dread of his despotical uncle, and the

influence he maintained over every branch of his family. A few short weeks of *perfect happiness* were the prelude to Margaret's cares. The fond husband took all the blame on himself like an honest fellow; and at my mother's feet made a confession which subdued her; for it finished by imploring her pity and consideration of his wife's condition; urging her to permit the marriage ceremony to be renewed in her presence, if she were dissatisfied with the proofs which her daughter could produce of the legality of those vows which had united them. 'My own marriage was not more binding,' added my dear mother, 'and what could I do, Henry?' 'Exactly that which you have done,' answered I. 'Proceed.' 'Nothing could be more amiable than his conduct was to Margaret and myself,' continued my mother,' nor more prudent. He explained his situation to us over and over again: said he was

certain he should have a friend in his mother, and that his sister Lucretia would make him independent the day he was of age; for that she hated to see him controuled by a man so tyrannical as Mr. Flamall.' A letter from this sister, broke in upon our comforts: it was affectionate and tender in the extreme; it contained bank notes to the amount of a hundred and twenty pounds, and a letter from Mr. Oliver Flint, his eldest brother, with an invitation to come over to him to Jamaica.' My mother then mentioned Philip's being a posthumous child, with those particulars which you know relative to his father's second marriage, and extraordinary will," continued Mr. Sinclair, "which particulars I pass over. Miss Flint urged him, in this letter, to avail himself of his brother's good intentions. 'You will,' added she, 'by this means shake off the yoke, which now oppresses you more than it serves you.

You will soon be independent of your mother's family; and I think you ought to lose no time. The bills enclosed are for your use. Say nothing of them to your uncle. You may have incurred some little debts, which although not disgraceful to a young man, he will call profusion, and tease me, and torment you for months with lectures, should they be brought to his accounts. For once in his life, at least, during the term of years, he has concurred in your mother's and my opinion relative to you. Lose no time in coming hither. We must enjoy your society a little while before you commence your voyage. Your absence has already been tedious to your affectionate—*Lucretia Flint.*'

"In a postscript she again added her caution respecting the bills informing him that she had got the start of his uncle by a post or two, who was then writing to his father! 'The doctor,' adds

Miss Flint, 'is to settle every thing of a pecuniary sort, and to supply you with cash for your journey. I have insisted on your not travelling in the stage-coach; you will therefore on your part be prepared for his intentions on this point.'

"This letter,' continued my mother, 'occasioned all the distress that it was calculated to produce on the mind of your sister. Her husband consoled her with sanguine hopes, arising from his prospects in this cruel separation. His brother Oliver was very rich, had buried all his children, and had promised to provide amply for him, on condition he paid him a visit. He would be a mediator he stood in need of with his uncle; and his sister Lucretia's letter was brought forwards in proof of her affection. He also exulted in his prudence. 'I have not,' said he, 'a single debt that I fear leaving to my tutor's examination. My wife will have a little supply, and Providence

has rendered my best friend useful to my first of earthly blessings.' He quitted us, leaving his sister's remittance with his wife. His letters from the hall and till he embarked were cordials to Margaret. In his last from London, was inclosed another bill of a hundred pounds, and in this he suggested the expediency of our retiring into the country. We had already determined on so doing. Your sister advanced in her pregnancy, and concealment was becoming daily necessary. From this time we have not heard from Mr. Flint. During the course of these events,' pursued my mother, 'poor Mrs. Montrose was suddenly removed by an apoplectic fit. Her family was broken up. Charles went to the south; and Miss Montrose took a situation as governess in a family at Leith. I shall only say,' continued she weeping, 'that during these trials Fanny Montrose was our consolation. She also is removed from

us! A Mr. Lindsey, the head clerk in Mr. Maclin's office, married her; and they removed to London, with advantageous views of his going abroad as supercargo to the West Indies in a ship of Mr. Maclin's. Poor Margaret, who had not recovered from her lying-in, and the shock of losing her little boy, whom grief had prepared for a speedy grave, sunk under the loss of her affectionate Fanny, and the doubts which distracted her: she will soon quit this world of sorrow!'

"It is needless to mention to you, Mr. Hardcastle," added Sinclair, "the inducements I had for suppressing those resolutions from appearing, which, as a man, and as the guardian and only prop of an injured sister, it became me to adopt. To comfort and to sooth was my business whilst I remained with her; and her spirits relieved from the oppressive secret with me, became more com-

posed. In the third week of the four which I was permitted to be absent from my vessel, then undergoing some necessary repairs, we were one morning surprised into a state of more imminent danger to Margaret's life than any she had hitherto sustained. A double letter was delivered to my mother by the servant-maid, in my sister's presence. She saw the address, and uttering a faint scream, instantly fainted. The contents of Philip's letter will better please you, than a description of the alarm which it produced," added Sinclair smiling. "To my mother he recommends the utmost caution in the delivery of the one enclosed 'to his beloved wife, to his long lost and only blessing.' To Margaret he writes with incoherent joy. His brother Oliver was stiled 'his saving angel,' 'his more than father:' 'Providence in rescuing him from the blackest treachery, had in its mercy, he confidently trusted, preserved her.

She could not, it was not possible that she could have believed him a faithless villain, unless the same wickedness which had been employed to destroy him, had reached her.' This letter concluded with ample instructions, to repair immediately to London; where his brother's agent would receive her, and provide for her immediate passage to him. An unlimited credit on this gentleman, with a draft for two hundred pounds on a banker at Edinburgh, were inclosed, with a positive injunction written by the good old man, to take care of herself as well as of the *dear infant:* to bring with her a female servant, qualified to be useful to her, as well as the nurse; and to be heedful about *fashions*, he having promised some of the girls, who had been unsuccessfully employed in setting their caps at Philip, the pattern of the one which had gained his heart. Poor Margaret on reading this passage forgot for

a time her joy; but the hurry of the moment and my presence, checked her useless lamentations. My duty was prescribed. I was resolved never to lose sight of her till she was in her husband's arms. When in London I made some inquiries respecting this Flamall. From what I could collect from Margaret relative to her husband's opinion of this *worthy* uncle, I made no doubt of his having been the cause of all the mischief. The character he bears in London justifies me in this suspicion; for I was informed, that he had the talents of a swindler, and the impudence to face any danger but the frown of an honest man. I shall put this to the test whenever we meet."—"You would do much better," observed I, "to turn him over to those as well disposed as yourself to rid the world of a rascal; and who have not your impediments in their way. Remember that your sister's worthy husband is his

nephew; and beware of breaking into the happiness which now invites her to Jamaica."—"We shall see," answered he rising, "much will depend on my knowing the particulars of this story. I am no Drawcansir; but by G—d he shall find me a *Sinclair!*"—We returned to the ladies; and after dining with my new friends, and drinking to the health of Philip Flint, with the utmost sincerity of heart, I escaped from Sinclair's toasts of Miss Cowley, with a head still sufficiently cool to detail my adventure to his lordship. He has done what he never fails to do; he has entered with the most lively interest into my concerns. Sinclair has letters from him to the governor of Jamaica and some others of his father's connections. He dined with Mrs. Flint; and was charmed by her sweet and modest manners. She is one of the prettiest women I ever saw. The perfect symmetry of her form and fea-

tures is wonderful! and with an expression of innocent vivacity and an infantile simplicity, she appears the beautiful *school-girl*, rather than the wife. She wants not solidity; for with some address she entered on the subject of her past troubles; and with a direct application to mine, bade me never despair, for that virtue would always attain its recompence. "You will have friends in Jamaica," added she affectionately, "who, in their own happiness, will not forget yours nor Miss Cowley's interest. Be assured of this, and contrive to inform the young lady that my husband will vigilantly watch his uncle. Philip is, Mr. Hardcastle, the most amiable and worthy of the human race! I was always convinced that he could not desert me; and I am certain he will serve Miss Cowley if he can."

I have seen my friends depart from this port. The ship sailed on Sunday

evening. Sinclair will write to me immediately on reaching Jamaica.—My father will expect to hear something of my health and pursuits. I have no inducements to wish the former of these articles better than it is: the latter are such as will not disgrace him or myself. To any nearer inquiry I cannot reply to his satisfaction, without deviating from that sincerity and truth, which he has taught me to respect even with more veneration than himself. I wish I were able to deceive myself in regard to my dear friend Lord William. Alas, Lucy, he must die! Nothing can save him from the ravages of the cruel though insidious destroyer. He knows this; and it is his concealed wish to die any where rather than at home. "My absence," said he to me the other evening, "has prepared my mother for the more final separation. She will not see my last struggle, nor hear my last sigh. Her home

will not be a perpetual remembrance of my funeral obsequies. I will winter at the Madeiras, Hardcastle, in order to be more remote from her." Poor fellow! amiable as thou art, what can lessen the sorrow which thou art doomed to inflict, long before that period, on all who know thee? I think he cannot live two months!

Yours, affectionately,

HORACE HARDCASTLE.

Here also is found a break of a few weeks in the correspondence between the friends. Letters, however, regularly passed from and to Lisbon, and the animated Miss Cowley, with renewed health and gaiety, thus continues her correspondence to Heathcot.

CHAP. X.

LETTER XXVII.

Miss Cowley to Miss Hardcastle.

December the 29th.

I Shall leave to Alice's descriptive powers Mrs. Wilson's triumph on Christmas-day. With all her mild and sympathizing qualities she would nevertheless have been an object of terror, had a poor Hindoo heard her tale of the slaughtered poultry, and her secret of making them fat and fair. Such is opinion, Lucy! But leaving this disquisition to wiser heads than my own, and honestly confessing myself implicated in the crime of

conniving at the shedding of innocent blood, I will proceed to inform you that I am deserted for a *plum-cake*, which will not be eaten till Twelfth-day at Durham, and which Mrs. Heartley and her train annually assit *to cut up*. I am, however, proof against all discontents. The Bay of Biscay continues open notwithstanding a Dutchman with skaits might go from hence to you in a strait line, in an hour or two. The weather has been celestial here during the frost. It gives to me aerial lightness, and I defy the intense coldness of the atmosphere. Wisely, however, reflecting that I had not the sylph's wing, I attired myself in my habit yesterday morning, and with my snow-shoes and India-shawl, I scudded away to the village, in order to see dame Dobs's fire-side. A bright sun, and the wind at my heels, sent me forward with a blithsome heart. I found her hearth blazing, and the good old woman so

cottoned up with *Mary's* comforts, that even the rheumatism is kept in check. She was quite amazed how I could "brave such deadly cold weather; and yet I looked like *a full-blown rose*, and so cheerful! But that did not amaze her, for in warming other people's hearts my own would always be gay." On leaving her cottage the whim took me to visit some friends of *my own;* and cheered by a few benedictions, and as many welcomes, I resolved to return home, by taking the circuit of the mill. Now, knowing that the finest description of a frost-piece that the most poetical imagination ever composed, would not please Mary, at least so well as one of my long stories, I will spare myself the disgrace of being censured as the dullest of mortals in this art; and the shame of feeling, that this is probably one reason for my yawning over descriptive subjects, except with a crayon at my fingers' ends. But we have all our

several gifts; *holding forth* is, unquestionably, mine, and I will begin my story by an exordium for Mary's edification. My text is drawn from my recollection of one of Quarles's emblems. You may, if your less retentive memory need it, still borrow the book from Deborah; and with the pictures recall the days when the restless Rachel stood for hours quietly listening to her expounding histories of them. One of these ingenious devices, if I be not mistaken, exhibits a youth borne on the wing of Hope, Fancy, and Desire, to an elevation remote from his safe abode. Careless of the approaching storm he still advances in his heedless career, till nature, exhausted, prompts him to pause. He does so, and with terror and amasement beholds the blackened sky, and hears the threatening thunder roll over his defenceless head. Now for the application. Thus did your heedless friend press on, although the

friendly sun, from time to time warned her, by his retiring brightness, that he had something else to do besides gladdening her path. At length I took the alarm, and on looking towards his late refulgent road, saw him covered with a black curtain, which, from time to time, he put aside, to see whether the heedless wanderer had wisdom and was seeking a refuge. I had the *wisdom* to speed as fast as I could to the miller's house, which was the nearest; but, like my emblem, I had not learned to know, that sailing with a fair wind, and an adverse one, made some difference in the course of the ship. I had now a north-easter in my teeth; and as if in return for my temerity, he rattled with his rude blast a shower of hailstones about my ears, which, though they did not subdue my courage, greatly discomfited me. The gracious luminary once more peeped through his veil and smiled on me. I had gained the last

field between me and my retreat when I took advantage of the hedge in order to adjust my shawl more about my face, which smarted with the keen blasts, and to recover my panting breath for renewed buffettings. At this providential moment I heard a child, concealed from my view by some hurdles, crying most lamentably, and repeatedly saying, "Get up, Johnny! pray get up! let us go home! I will go without you!" I removed the hurdle, and perceived the mourner in the hollow path. He was a stout boy of about nine years old, and was endeavouring to raise from the ground one of about seven, who appeared insensible. The danger was apparent; I flew to the children. "Where is your home?" asked I. "At the mill," answered the shivering boy. "Pray wake brother Johnny, he does not mind me; and my granny will scold me if leave him, because I took him out without leave." Unmindful of

this petition, with the sturdy boy's help, I wrapped the torpid child in my shawl, which, as you know, is of the largest size, and I hastened to the house, with the offending and terrified culprit. He complained that he was weary and must rest; whilst I, with an air of authority, dragged him on till I became nearly exhausted myself, though remote from his danger; for I did not even feel it was cold, so great was my terror respecting the poor child I had left hehind me, and the dread of seeing the one with me refuse to advance; for he hung back from time to time, saying that I hurt him, that he would sit down a while, and bade me go on without him.

From this terrible dilemma I was relieved by meeting with a servant of the house, who was looking for the vagrants. He called to another, and I was soon relieved from my burden, who had conquered me, and had composedly laid

down on the ground. I followed the person who bore the child in his arms to the house, and the other man went forwards to the succour of the poor abandoned boy.

A neat and genteel-looking woman met us in the yard, whom, from her terror and grief, I supposed to be their mother. I tried to allay her fears, but finding that was not possible, contented myself with supplying her duty. She carried the boy to the kitchen fire, and, weeping bitterly, began to chafe his hands. My authoritative voice was at length heard, and in spite of his outcries he was put to bed in the blankets. Happily the village farrier was present, and supported me in my opinion. He said he had read some published cases of the Humane Society, and that he would answer for the other child if they would trust to him. The child appeared, and my shawl having been useful, he was judged to be in no danger by the doctor,

who began his operations by rubbing him with snow. The children being considered as safe, I was next thought of. With many excuses the young woman led me through a large brick-floored parlour to a neat staircase, which conducted us to a very pretty snug room, in which was quietly seated an old lady knitting; and who had, as it appeared, escaped the general horror of the family in the kitchen, by being somewhat deaf and lame. She looked surprised by my intrusion, but instantly enquired whether the children were returned. The daughter, with more self-command than I expected, replied in the affirmative, adding that I had been so good as to lead them home. Her face betrayed, however, in part, the disaster, and I assured the grandmother that the danger was past and both children doing well. Her thanks for my services were followed by her "being certain I wanted some refreshment." She

was not mistaken, for I was faint with hunger. Her little dinner was just ready, and she thought something warm and comfortable better for me than wine. I was entirely of the same opinion. Susan was dispatched to hasten matters below stairs; whilst with officious zeal I was placed in her own white dimity easy chair, and the hearth was replenished with fuel. The neatness of the apartment, the order which presided at the dining-table, the delicacy of my napkin, and the china in which was served a boiled fowl with vegetables and bacon, and a bread-pudding, excited in my mind a curiosity to know something more of my courteous hosts, concluding that these relics of former opulence did not belong to the miller's lady. I had no sooner obeyed the calls of my famished stomach, than I thought of my friends at the hall, and dispatched a note to Mrs. Allen, informing her simply, that, finding the air two sharp for

me, I had stopped at the mill till the coach came for me. I added a verbal commission to the note, and desired that the person who was to carry it, might be cautioned to say nothing of the cause of my delay. The old lady heard more of this message than I intended. She turned pale, and with much emotion said, she was sure the truth had been kept from her: she would see her children, and if they could not come to her she would be carried to them. A more particular detail of the disaster followed; and her daughter assured her both her boys were in a fine perspiration, and the apothecary had no doubt but they would be fit to truant again on the morrow. The grandmother still looked incredulous. "My dear Madam," observed I, "you see their mother composed, and satisfied that the children are doing well: why should you now doubt of their safety?"—"Poor creature," replied she,

"she has with myself to thank God's providence and you, for their preservation. She would have lost her senses had they perished, though she is not their mother; but these poor babes have no parents, nor any friends to love them but ourselves." She wept. "However," added she, "their aunt is father and mother to them." Susan mentioned as a sort of apology for her carelessness, that the eldest boy had persuaded Johnny to leave the mill-chamber where they were playing, to go and slide with some boys of the parish. It appeared that he enjoyed for some time his pastime with these children; but Johnny cried, and complained of the cold, and his chilblains, and said he would go home. Frank, his brother, soothed him from time to time, bidding him sit down on his coat, which the vigorous boy gave him. The hailstones sent the boys to their cottages which were at hand, and the tru-

aunts began their walk, till Johnny would rest, saying he was sleepy, and would "stay a bit where he was."—"You know the sequel," added the grateful Susan addressing her mother, "and what we owe to this young lady."—"Would it be credited," observed the good woman, with visible thankfulness to Heaven, "that a creature so delicate and seemingly feeble, should have been the chosen instrument of a work of such mercy! But he who destined her for the work, will recompense her! Thousands more equal to the trial of strength would have turned aside!"—"I cannot think so," returned I. "Ah, my dear young lady!" answered she mournfully, "I have lived to see that what was every one's business was no one's business. Their poor grandfather might have been saved, had there been one with a heart like yours, amongst fifty, who saw him sink." To divert her from the silence which ensued, I praised

her abode, observing that I could not have supposed the house so commodious from the road. "Why, in fact," replied she, "this wing can hardly be said to belong to the miller's house. It is quite separate, except by the back stairs you came up. In summer we enter by the garden, which is our own, we have our little kitchen and parlour below stairs, and four chambers. This wing was built for her own use, by the friend who left us the estate, and is not included in the lease of the farm. I also kept it for my own use. But my good tenants," added she, "not contented with having us for their next door neighbours a part of every summer, persuaded us to pass our Christmas holidays here; and what with the severe cold, and the rheumatism in my hip, they are likely to have me on their own hands some time; for Susan must mind her business, and the boys will be safer at school than here; for Frank is

the copy of his dear father, always in harm's way, with the spirit of a lion, and the heart of a dove!" She wiped her eyes again, and knitted with astonishing quickness. "What business does your daughter follow?" asked I. "She was a milliner and mantua-maker; had a shop at Bishops-Auckland; clear-starched and mended lace; nothing came amiss to her hand; for she was industry itself, and the best of daughters."—"You have been fortunate," observed I, smiling, "in keeping to yourself this comfort: she is a very pretty woman."—"She was pretty at twenty," answered she, "but more than fifteen years may be added to that reckoning; and the troubles we have had have greatly changed her. She had once in her cheeks a colour like a rose; but like yours, my dear young lady, it could not stand all attacks. But you are not so pale as you were an hour since; I hope you feel warm. How you contrived to

keep yourself from perishing is astonishing. I wonder how you kept your feet, or had courage to face such an air." She stirred the cheerful fire, and begged me to draw my chair closer to it. I smilingly told her that she gave me credit for more courage than I had, for that on sallying out I had turned my back on the enemy, forgetting that he would not turn his on me on my return home. But he shall not intimidate me," added I; "for I will come again and see you, in spite even of hail storms." She looked pleased, and said the sight of me would do her good as long as she lived. "You look healthy," observed I.—"Pretty well for my years," replied she, "but within sight of four-score one must expect infirmities. Thank God, I have not outlived my memory, and that reminds me of him, who from the hour I was an infant at my mother's breast, has watched over me, and whose arm of mercy will support me

to my grave. Here is another instance of his loving kindness to those who lean on him!"—She renewed her tears. Susan now entered to say that the carriage was in sight, and I instantly took my leave of the good woman, whose spirits did not appear quite composed enough to receive more guests; and as I perceived Mrs. Allen and Sir Murdock in the coach, I tripped down stairs to them. My ruddy face and gay air, somewhat surprised them; for notwithstanding my prohibition and the fidelity of my messenger, the story had reached them; the farrier having related his share of the miracle in the stables at the hall whilst doctoring his patients there. The frost-bitten Miss Cowley was received with greetings and endearments which might have warmed her had she been congealed; and during the first enthusiasm of humanity, no one thought of chiding her for her folly in leaving a warm covert for a freezing

walk. But, alas! who is perfect? Mrs. Allen, *even our Mrs. Allen is mortal.* Before night her philanthropy cooled. My colour offended her: I was, (she insisted it should be so,) *feverish*: and she gave the most solid reasons in the world for the partinacity of her opinion: "it was *impossible* I should be otherwise." As my stiff joints and aching head were rather too stubborn evidences in her favour; and, being moreover too sleepy for a debate, I passively suffered her to make me up like a bale of flannel; and drinking with docility a treacle posset, to her great contentment I fell asleep; when, lo and behold! the fever had disappeared, and I had lost eight hours of my existence; for not a dream had found access to my fancy in all those dormant hours. The dear and too tender Allen is now only anxious for my *complexion.* Peeling lips are however within her diploma: and with a face more crimsoned than

than my own, she has now brought me some lip-salve. Who can help loving her? I am sometimes afraid I shall love her too much. She wishes me not to write any longer. The second dose of treacle posset is preparing, and my flannels are at the fire. I never felt more comfortable in my life; but no matter, she is gratified. Good night. The frost could not find the heart of your R. Cowley; that was in another latitude secure from its influence.

DEC. 30th.

P. S. I would not seal my letter last night, lest I should have boasted too soon of my triumph over the northern blasts; but this morning finding even my complexion not the worse for its malice, I no longer hesitate to say, that Eolus resembles his stern-faced sister *Adversity*, only oppose each in their own way: *he* may be fearlessly encountered,

and *she* softened down to a friendly aspect. Activity and firmness are the only guards against both. With this armour within and without, we shall neither shrink from the storm of the elements, nor faint at the visitation of the angel who is sent to purify our hearts with an efficacy not less salutary than that agent of mercy, which directs the whirlwinds in their desolating career to sweep away plagues, pestilence, and death, from the air we breathe. I have just now made my dear Mrs. Allen look grave. I had forgotten my wrappers this morning, in crossing the passage to Lady Maclairn's apartment. She appealed to Lady Maclairn, and again, it was "*impossible*" my blood could be in a state to resist cold. I had just finished my last moral inference, and I could not at once be made to tremble at the tempered breeze of a covered passage. I argued in favour of my own theory; she maintained that I

more confidence in my strength than prudent. "Alas!" replied I, "how y wretches, more feeble than my- bide the pelting of the pitiless pu!"

Poor naked wretches, with houseless ls and unfed sides who protects n from cold, my dear friend?" "Who ns!" replied she, with the glow of e we have so often remarked, "who that Being whose providential care ith *many* a subject of speculation, some *a doubt*, and with multi- es neither remembered nor acknow- ged."

Do you know I begin to suspect that s. Allen has taken an unfair advantage me; for seeing since the arrival of the bon packet that my charity is enlarg- to "good will to all men," she fan- it admits of no limitation, and that ss Flint stands a chance of coming in a share. She has therefore trepanned

me into her room so often of late under some pretence or other, that my harp is nearly stationary in her apartment; and if I am to credit Mrs. Allen, it has something of the powers of David's, and from time to time lulls into temporary repose a spirit not less perturbed than poor Saul's. I am not yet an entire convert to Mrs. Allen's creed in favour of repenting sinners, although I can pity them. I cannot exactly think with her, that they deserve our peculiar commiseration and tenderness, still adhering to the maxim of, "as you sow, so must you reap." But I am becoming more placable, and more worthy of you; and I am going to read to Miss Flint an hour or two; for to tell you the truth, I do relent when I behold her writhing with pain. The total loss of the limb she hurt, would be nothing to the exquisite pain she suffers in the means used for its cure. Mary will think this a penalty sufficiently se-

vere for the discipline she gave to her niece, and I may as well confess, that I am of the same opinion. Heaven bless you, and remember in your prayers your

RACHEL COWLEY.

CHAP XI.

LETTER XXVIII.

From Miss Cowley to Miss Hardcastle.

"SIX mails due from Lisbon! and yet Rachel Cowley talks with contentment of *the celestial weather!*" To be sure she does, my dear Miss Hardcastle, and for the simplest reason on earth. If *I* be disappointed, Horace is *not;* and I can subsist upon his happiness, and be thankful. Besides, it is something in my favour to reflect, that the very elements can be *obstinate* as well as myself. You tell me, that it is begun to be suspected, that my rejection of my Jamaica pre-

tender, with my refusal of Sir George's reiterated and *generous* offers, arise from some engagement of a tender kind between Horace and myself. Be so good as to inform the good people who so carefully qualify their words, that *I am engaged*, that I make no secret of my engagement, and that in defiance of Lady Coldstream's lecture to me at ten years old, I still love, *passionately love*, Horace Hardcastle, and almond biscuits. I remember perfectly the solemnity of her face when she observed that "young ladies were to love nothing *passionately*." It may therefore be as well to inform her, that I only love *obstinately*; if such it must be thought, to prefer that virtue which has rendered me virtuous. If to cherish an affection resulting from the best gifts of nature, and sanctioned by my reason and principles, be to be culpable, I am of all women most to be censured and condemned; for I glory in my

shame, and rejoice at my defeat. But you will say, that even Horace Hardcastle must fall short of that elevation to which my fond imagination has raised him. You are deceived; I neither expect, nor even wish for absolute perfection in a husband. My eyes are human, too strong a light would but dazzle and confound them. But I love Horace even in his foibles; twelve years acquaintance with them have made them *my own*, as well as his virtues. But to be serious, tell me to whose influence was your dear mother indebted for a docility on my part which she did not even expect from the untamed rebel to all constraint. To whom am I indebted for patience, and forbearance now? What moral attainment, what acquired knowledge do I possess, that has not been encouraged by Horace's example? I never was, nor ever shall be, one of your sentimental misses who can at pleasure decorate any man

with the trappings of a hero in romance. I think, if I can judge of myself, that I am ungentle by nature, and so fond of freedom, as to love but little the shackles which some so eagerly seek. I am confident however, that I have one ingredient necessary for perfect love: *for I fear*, and I always have feared Horace. How often has his reproving eye recalled me to obedience and submission! What has been the delight, when by my little exertions, and petty triumphs over my turbulent spirit, I have seen his face glowing with pleasure, and heard his joy expressed by his saying, "Rachel Cowley will be as gentle and amiable as my mother!" I am persuaded that Heaven has destined Horace Hardcastle to be my guide and my protector. I should faint and tire in the road of duty with a companion whose paths I had to chuse and point out. But with Horace Hardcastle I shall be safe, for he will neither loiter himself,

nor permit me to relax in search of that virtue which leads to peace. I would rather live to feed monkeys and nurse cats and kittens, than to be the wife of a man no wiser than myself. Negative virtues will not satisfy me, I must be the wife of a man whose understanding and whose conduct will preserve active the emulation my mind requires. In a word, I must esteem, respect, and even *fear a little* the man, whom it will be my duty to obey. Now have the charity to point out to me a man better qualified to direct my mutinous spirit than your brother? You cannot. Be then perfectly indifferent to the nonsense you hear from empty heads and cold hearts. I leave such without malice to their opinions of happiness; if they be satisfied it is well. It is not my business to investigate the solidity of those principles from which their opinions originate; but whilst I feel that my own correspond with all

that is worthy of a reasonable and responsible being, I will adhere to them, and laugh at the advice I know to be no better than folly in a grave dress. You will perceive I am not in one of my gentle moods. I should not have been so guarded, had I met my kind friend Lady V——. She is a simpleton. Her son behaved properly, and Rachel Cowley's rejection of his hand has neither lessened his merit, nor his consequence. Adieu my dear girl, and believe me always yours,

R. COWLEY.

LETTER XXIX.

From the same to the same.

SOME benevolent fairy, my dear Lucy, who presided at your birth, on finding nature had done so much for you, that

her intended and usual donations would be but kindness thrown away, has graciously reserved her gifts for me, foreseeing the hard destiny to which I was subjected. Being condemned, like the sleeping beauty of the wood, to a hundred years nap, it is presumable she would, had her power been equal to her benevolent wishes, have bestowed perpetual youth on me, and a face that in any night-cap would have been worthy of a lover at the expiration of my captivity. But as this effort was beyond the power of her magical wand, she has been contented with gaining permission for me to walk in my sleep, and to seek adventures for your entertainment, and my own relief from despair. But to my tale, lest you should fancy it a dream, and that, far inferior to Prince Rufus's enchanted palace, cooks, turnspits, fidlers, and beaux and belles, awakened to eat, drink, and be merry.

Finding I began to be weary of my good friend Eolus (for one may be tired of what is good, by having too much of it,) I determined, in order to vary the scene, to pay a morning visit to my new friends at the mill. "I should like," said I, "to see these boys now warmed into life by a pinch of snuff and snow water." The whole junto took the alarm. The roads were impassable; I should get my death of cold. I only laughed at their prognostics, and persisted in my intention, urging that the thaw, which has began here, had moderated the severity of the air. Lady Maclairn, *always ready at an expedient*, recollected that the coach-wheels wanted some repair, and her cook some corn to be ground for the fowls; and that at all events it was better for me to ride than to walk in the dirt. I readily conceded to this opinion, and, being wrapped up in pelisses and shawls, to the exact resemblance of the bag of corn, I

departed. I found the little family one of those who, according to *Deborah*, "go as they would be met, and sit as they would be seen." Wisdom is wisdom with me, Lucy, "whether," as my darling Sancho says, "it is in a silk purse or in a sow's ear." There is nothing, in my opinion, more indicative of good sense than a habit of order. But let us go on. The old lady was giving the boys their reading-lesson when I entered, in a bible which was before them. Susan was making a muslin gown. My entrance interrupted them; and my notice of the children was followed by their being dismissed, but not before the grandmother, with unaffected anxiety, dictated to them their speech of gratitude to the dear good young lady who had saved their lives. This ceremony performed, they with glowing cheeks retired to enjoy, unconstrainedly, their existence. My observations were next directed to the

beautiful muslin robe Susan was trimming with very fine edging: it was made with taste, in the *Circassian stile*, as the fashion has named it. "It is intended for a bride who lives in this neighbourhood," observed Susan, with a suppressed smile; "perhaps you may have seen the young lady: she rides frequently on horseback." Finding this insufficient for my information, she proceeded to tell me that it was Miss Gubbins she meant, who was going to be married to a young farmer. "Her father," added she, "knows what is to be done in that line of business by experience: he has got a good fortune by the plow." I instantly recollected having met *this Miss Gubbins* on her road; and the idea of her singularly short and corpulent person, in a Circassian robe, was too ludicrous for my gravity. "Dear me!" observed the old lady, who had joined in my laugh with great glee, "what would you say to many of my

daughter's best customers! I am sure they divert me, though they make me stare. Young women whom I remember with a flowered-cotton short cloak, now buy what they call *patent lace*, and the straw or black silk bonnet is supplied by velvet, flowers, and feathers. It was only yesterday that a dairy-maid was here to get Susan to shorten the waist of her Sunday-gown, and to make it draw round the neck with a frill like the ladies'."— "My mother makes very free with my customers, Madam," observed Susan, smiling; "she forgets that those who keep a stall in *vanity fair* live by the folly of those who buy; and to say the truth, so do I sometimes, for it is amazing to see the money now expended by a class of people who, a few years since were in the habits of frugality. This gown, for example," added she, "is one of *four* I have made for Miss Gubbins; and you will laugh again when I tell you that her

best dress has tassels and loops of silver." Susan folded up the robe, and made her apology for quitting me. She was going to her *shop* with Miss Gubbins in the gig, which was in sight, and she left us. I mentioned my intention of employing her to the good old lady, and engaged to speak to the ladies of the hall, not doubting but we should want Circassian robes with the rest of our neighbours. "You are very kind," answered Mrs. Crofts, slightly bowing, "but pray, Madam, is it true that Miss Howard is gone to London to serve in a milliner's shop?" I replied in the negative, expressing my surprise at her question. "Why to be sure," answered she, knitting with amazing rapidity, "one can hardly believe her aunt to be so unfeeling as to snffer such a young creature to be thrown into the wide world *in such a way.* But after what has lately happened, and what I know of Miss Flint, nothing of her

cruelty would surprise me! Yet I did imagine her uncle would not permit Miss Mary to leave him for such a situation." She dropped some stitches and turned from me to repair them, wiping her eyes at the same instant. I now consoled her by briefly mentioning Mary's precise situation with you; said I would read to her a part of Miss Howard's last letter to me, and I immediately read to her Mary's account of Lucy Hardcastle's mode of treatment. "May the Almighty shower his blessings on her and hers for generations to come!" exclaimed the good woman in an extasy. "May the orphan she shelters be to her a blessing! and may her cruel aunt live to see Howard's child in no want of her protection!" ---"Miss Flint has suffered much, I fear," observed I, "from the violence of her temper, and also from the misrepresentations of her conduct to you as well as to others. She is truly blamable on some

points, but I am persuaded she never meant to place her niece in a situation of danger to her innocence. I think she has feeling; I am certain she is sorry for the late instance of her want of self-command."—"Ah, my dear young lady!" replied Mrs. Crofts, shaking her head, "you judge by the goodness of your nature; I have heard of Miss Cowley. My children are not the only objects of her benevolence! But I cannot think charitably of Miss Flint. The friend who left me this estate knew her better than you do. Poor soul! she suffered enough by knowing her! and I have had many a heart-ach in hearing Miss Flint's degeneracy from the angel, her mother! If I thought it would not tire you, I would tell you by what means I have gained a knowledge of the family, and a competency so far beyond my expectations; for when the first Mrs. Flint saw me, I was poor and wretched. It was

the day or two after I had seen my husband a corpse, that she came to succour me. Susan was then at my breast, and I had a boy and a girl besides her to support. My poor husband," continued she, brushing away a tear, "was well known at Chelsea; he was a boatman, and always called 'honest Frank' by the gentry; for he was sober, diligent, and civil. He lost his precious life in endeavouring to save a man from drowning who was intoxicated, and could do nothing for himself. A subscription was raised for my relief. But it was *Mrs. Flint* who poured the oil into my wounds. She it was who raised my eyes to God, and bade me trust to the never-failing friend of the widow and the fatherless. She found I was expert at needle-work, and she furnished me with plenty of it, besides assisting me with money, for my rent and coals. I got on with comfort like this. When my daughter Jenny was fourteen,

she fixed her with an old lady, a widow, with whom she went to live at Newcastle. Jane was a clever, active girl, and could read and write well. Her lady became so fond of her that she made her, as one may say, her favoured child, and when she died left her all her clothes and linen with three hundred pounds. She was too well trained to forget her mother in her prosperity; and on her marrying a farmer, to whom she had been sometime engaged, I removed, and settled at Newcastle, Jane being fixed near that town. Thus I lost sight of Mrs. Flint, and escaped, in part, the sorrow of her death, which happened soon after. But I shall never forget her! No, nor the angel who used to accompany her to see us, with her pockets filled with cakes for Frank, who was nearly of her own age. I think I now see her putting on Susan's new shoes, and exulting over her, because she could step alone! But she was

formed for the heaven she is in! and surely never was there beheld so perfect a beauty! I do not think Miss Howard altogether so beautiful as her mother; for Mrs. Howard had height, and more vivacity; but if she is as good, it will be well for her that she has lived in this world of trial! Well, my dear young lady, time went on with me, sometimes sunshine, sometimes cloudy; but the widow's friend was always near me! My Susan was an apprentice to a milliner and mantua-maker. Mr. Webster, my son-in-law, grew wealthy every day; and acted by me like a child. Frank gave us some sorrow; he was discontented with living at the farm, and wished to be a sailor. I had suffered enough from water! and I could not be brought to consent. Besides, his brother loved him, and had promised to make a man of him, if he would continue to be diligent and sober; and this Frank was, to his dying-

day!" She dropped a tear, and proceeded. "I had just settled myself and Susan in a well accustomed shop, when Frank secretly left us, and for a time my sorrows were renewed. At last I received a letter from him, and I found he had not forgotten his poor mother, nor his gratitude to her benefactress and his own. He was actually groom at the hall under another name, whilst I thought him exposed to the dangers of the sea. The account he gave me of Mrs. Howard's (then Miss Mary Flint) distressful situation, in her father's house, and left as it were to the mercy of the merciless, quite overpowered me. I went with Frank's letter to my daughter Webster's; and she declared, that Frank was sent by the Almighty for the purpose of delivering this innocent lamb, who had a hundred times been kind to him, and whose dear mother had saved us from ruin. So we continued, Madam, with

the blessing of God, and the worthy Mr. Greenwood's assistance, to rescue Miss Mary from her cruel sister's power; and Mr. Webster, who went for her, conducted her in safety to his house, where for some days she was very ill. A month's good nursing, and our love, set her up again; and then, following Mr. Greenwood's instructions, I accompanied her to Berwick, where Mr. Howard met us. I was not surprised, when I saw the lover, at her preference of him; nor that Miss Flint should want to marry him, for he was one of the handsomest men I ever set my eyes on; but beauty was the least of Mr. Howard's advantages! You have heard how much he was respected here, Madam, and to this hour his name is reverenced. Well, my business was finished at Berwick and I witnessed a marriage, which, with all its difficulties, united two hearts and two creatures who were gazed at as being made for each other's happi-

ness. Mr. Howard returned to Tarefield with his wife; and I neither repented *then*, nor have I *since*, of the part I had in bringing them together. Let those who blasted their comforts answer for the mischief!"—Her hands trembled, and she put aside her work to wipe away the falling tear.—"Frank, finding that he could be no farther serviceable to Miss Mary, returned home; but we soon after lost sight of him again, though with contentment. He married a very good girl, and went into partnership with her father, who was a wheelwright, and lived many miles from us. They were, however, comfortable, till a dreadful fever swept them away."—She paused.—"I had yet a child with me. Susan was my anchor of hope, and again I took heart. She refused several suitors for my sake, Madam; and her industry and good behaviour gained her many friends. To ease the rest of a house, which suited her increasing busi-

ness, we let the first floor; and my son's attorney, a very worthy gentleman of the name of Lloyd, knowing it to be vacant, and that we only received one lady, recommended to us a Mrs. Barnes, a client of his, who had recently lived near London, as a suitable lodger for us; being a very quiet retired lady, and having no connections in the town but his family. Little did I suspect, when she arrived, that I was taking under my roof the wretch who had so barbarously treated Mrs. Howard! nor could I have conceived that time and repentance could have produced such a change in any one; for a more quiet and obliging woman could not be found than my lodger. She was satisfied with every thing; and we were so pleased with her, that at last we agreed to her request, that we should provide her table for her; and for which she paid so handsomely, that I was enabled to keep a maid-servant. She was,

in the mean time, evidently a sickly and melancholy woman, but never, with us, a discontented one; and when, in the evening, we were with her, in her apartment, she took delight in helping Susan in her work, at which she was not less expert than herself. She never quitted her room, but to go to morning prayers, and sometimes to Mr. Lloyd's; but these visits were rare. Thus passed three years, and her increasing fondness for Susan was returned by every endeavour on our part to make her comfortable. But it was clear to us that she was a declining woman, and broken down by grief. Soon after this period, she told us one morning, as she passed through the shop, that she should go from chapel to Mr. Lloyd's, and meant to dine with him. We both remarked, when she returned, that she was more chatty than usual, and we renewed our usual exhortations, to induce her to use more exercise, and try to amuse

herself: her answers were as they had always been, desponding; and we changed the subject. That very day week, she went again to the attorney's, and again we fancied that she returned home more cheerful. Some few days after she went again, telling us that we should think her a gossip; but that she should drink tea at home. We consequently waited some little time for her; but concluding her friends had detained her, were just set down, when she arrived in a sedan chair, and as we thought, in a dying condition. The people who attended her, kept a snuff-shop; and they informed me that she had been seized with a fit in the shop, whilst waiting for some snuff. You may suppose we did all that could be done; and in less than an hour, she was in bed, with a doctor and a nurse to attend her, both of whom Mrs. Lloyd sent us. I was, however, too much concerned for her, to leave her that night with a

stranger. She was hurried and confused till near morning, when she slept, and awoke composed. We had soon the satisfaction of seeing her better; but her melancholy was more apparent than ever; and from that time she never left her room.—On her sending me one day to Mr. Lloyd's on business, soon after her recovery, I asked her why she would not take my arm and try to go herself, the morning being so pleasant. 'No, no!' answered she with great uneasiness, 'I will never expose myself to such another shock as I have had, I have enough on my mind without such terrors.' On my questioning her, she owned that the sight of Mr. Flamall had occasioned her fit. He entered into the snuff-shop with his nephew Mr. Philip Flint, as it appeared, and she was overpowered by seeing them. I was nearly being so, "Madam," continued the good woman, "when I discovered by her discourse whom I had har-

boured in my house; but I concealed my surprise; for I said to myself, assuredly God has created in her a new heart; and it is not for me to judge her. She wept most grievously; and from what I could gather, I thought she had been seduced by Mr. Flamall when a young woman, and had thus become subservient to Miss Flint's cruel purposes. She perceived my suspicions, and redoubling her tears, told me that I was quite wide of the mark; for that she had been always too homely for his pleasures, though not so for purposes more base and wicked than I suspected. 'But,' added she, with a look of despair, and wringing her poor hands, 'for God's sake, do not question me farther. I cannot shew the villain without bringing destruction on the heads of the innocent: and that I will never do! Besides, I cannot prove the fact. All I know for certain is, that he has ruined my poor soul!' From this time she frequent-

ly talked of the Tarefield family; and in such a way, that I persuaded her to open her mind to a clergyman; but she always said, that God would bring the truth to light in his own time; she would not be the ruin of more of her dear lady's children. She even solicited the visits of the minister notwithstanding this; but always chose that either myself or Susan should be present, and he was struck by her piety and submission. She never got the better of the surprise of meeting with Flamall. The doctor said, she died of a consumption; but I know it was of a troubled conscience, and a broken heart; although a penitent one. I was with her the last night she breathed in this world. I shall never forget her! Such a dying-bed, Madam! She raved continually of Miss Flint, of Mrs. Howard, of Mr. Flamall; then looking piteously in my face, she would ask me twenty times 'who told me the secret.' Weary with hearing her,

I at length said, 'What secret?' '*The coffin!* put me in! put me in, they will not find me *there!*' said she. Another time, she called on Mr. Philip Flint. 'Oh, do not let him hang me!' said she, struggling and tearing off the cap on her head, 'I nursed you; I was faithful to you; I loved you as the child of my own body! Poor child! you could not help it!' 'Help what!' asked I. 'That Mrs. Howard died for want of bread,' answered she. Then followed another struggle for breath. Then she knew me, and said, 'Pray for me, I am dying. All is over with me!' So, I soothed her; and she pressed my hand, and held it so fast I could not get it from her. Then she whispered so low, I could understand only these words:—'They told me it was '*a deed!*' In this manner she continued till five o'clock in the morning. When, poor, poor soul! she sunk into her last sleep,

trying to spell the word *Philip;* which she never could do: at nine her sufferings closed.

"You will not wonder, after this account, at my opinion of Miss Flint," continued the good woman. "I am not the only one in this neighbourhood who believes she has no more right to the wealth she enjoys than I have; though but few have my reasons for this belief. However, what I think I keep to myself, not even Susan knows what I have told you; who, like an angel, have taken care to remove from this *vile woman* a niece whom she hated; for the wicked can never bear the sight of those whom they have defrauded. God is just, Madam, even in this world. Let Miss Flint try to purchase, with her ill-gotten wealth, one sleep like yours, when you close your eyes, thinking of the innocent lamb you have protected! Poor wretch! poor wretch!" added she, shaking her venerable head,

"I pity her. But to proceed, you may guess at our surprise, when we found that Mrs. Barnes had left to us every shilling she had; and you may judge of what passed in my mind, when I found she had signed her will that very day on which she so accidentally met Mr. Flamall and his nephew. This estate was left me only for my life. Susan had her legacy, in the furniture and clothes. The dear children are my heirs. They are orphans, Miss Cowley," added she, sinking her voice to a whisper, "poor orphans! What could I do in such a strait! But I often think of the *price* my poor friend gave for the means of these children's future bread. How do I know that the wages of sin will prosper even in the hands of the innocent?"—"Leave that consideration," replied I, "to the Providence which directed its uses to the innocent. Forbear to consider too minutely the retributive justice of an all-

wise Being; but in this instance of his mercy to you, do not forget the conduct of your worthy son."—"You encourage me," replied she, "to trust every thing that troubles me on this subject to your better reason. I have a paper or two of poor Mrs. Barnes's that do me no good at times. I found them by chance, and even Susan knows not of them. I do not like to destroy them, lest it should be improper; and yet I should be sorry to leave them for other's finding, when I am gone. You shall see them." She turned towards a bureau at her hand, and from a private drawer produced the papers. "I found them *here*," said she, placing them in my hand; "put them in your pocket, and at your leisure read them. Keep them, or destroy them as you think fit. I am certain you are the friend of Miss Howard, and her worthy uncle. But as I was saying," continued she, settling herself with more compo-

sure, "this unexpected legacy and my son Webster's going to America with his family, where, according to him, they pay neither tithes nor taxes, induced us to take a good-accustomed shop at Bishop's-Auckland, which has answered very well although we pay taxes and tithes; and I shrewdly suspect my son Webster has repented selling his farm in Old England, although Jane will not own it. I have told you a long story, my dear young lady," continued she, "and I think you will no longer wonder at my thinking Miss Flint '*up to any mischief*.' But may I take the liberty of asking you whether it is true that she rules Lady Maclairn with a rod of iron?" I satisfied her curiosity with *discretion*. "I am glad to hear she is so considerate," replied she, "for Mrs. Barnes always said *she* was a *lamb* amongst *wolves*. But pray, how does Miss Flint bear her brother Philip's absence so long?" I mentioned his pro-

spects, adding, that although her spirits were much depressed from the probability of his remaining in Jamaica with his elder brother, who had declared his intention of making him his heir, yet she considered his interest as something. "God be praised!" exclaimed she, "who knows what this may do! Poor Captain Flint may, at last, have his own; and Mrs. Howard's child will be secure of comfort. I do not wish to see the proverb verified," added she, "which says, 'out of sight, out of mind;' because I never heard any one speak ill of young Mr. Flint; but there is money enough to make more happy than *one;* and whether I am right or wrong in what I think, I must say that Captain Flint is as deserving as his young brother, and has a just title to be considered. He was his dear mother's pride, and Mrs. Howard's comfort! However, rich or poor, he will be reverenced here, and happy hereafter."

The carriage appeared, the corn was ground, and your Rachel Cowley took her leave.

It were time lost to follow my train of thoughts; yours will run in the same channel. But it delights my soul, Lucy, to contemplate the proofs of a Providence visibly interfering in the cause of the virtuous. Poor Frank's children! How succoured! How relieved! But I will say no more, lest you fancy me more *superstitious* and presumptuous than rational, in those thoughts which at this moment occupy me. I know your ascendency, and will repress my enthusiasm, till you decide, whether I have been the appointed instrument of a deserving power, in its peculiar mercy to this family; and whether, my strong affection for Mary Howard does not originate from the same efficient cause of all good. Be this as it may, I am grateful to my Maker for the pleasure he has annexed to my

duty; and for a heart, which knows no gratification, that equals the sense of living to perform his will. And in what does this consist, Lucy, if not, in loving our neighbour as ourselves, and our Maker supremely. God bless you, my friend; I am *oppressed*, but not *depressed* by the reflexions of the present hour. But you know your own

RACHEL COWLEY.

Papers found by Mrs. Crofts, copied and sent to Miss Hardcastle by her friend Rachel Cowley.

"WHITHER shall I go from thy spirit? or whither shall I flee from thy presence? If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there. If I make my bed in hell, behold thou art there also. If I say, surely the darkness shall cover me; even then the night shall be light about me!"

" Will no suffering for sin be accepted, no expiation admitted, but that which would, with my ruin in this world, bring down destruction on the innocent? Thou must suffer, my soul, the penalty of thy transgressions; it would be to *multiply them* to declare them. No, I will be silent. God knoweth all things. In his own time that 'which is done in secret, shall be proclaimed on the house tops.' Then, and then only, will it appear that I was tempted beyond my strength, nay, even deceived! But let me pause, and *curse* the love of gold that made me an easy prey!"

" I was told I should be well here, that repose from labour was all I wanted. I was dismissed with kindness, and loaded with the bounty of my lady! But she could not give me what she has not, *peace* of *mind.* Yet, *she can sleep!* She has not dreams like mine! She can laugh at my sufferings, and tell me, that they are

fancies, and proceed from fever. Was it *fever* that suddenly rushed into my views at the sight of Mrs. Howard's coffin? I knew for weeks that she was in a dying condition, and yet I could then sleep. Was it fever that conveyed to my astounded ears the voice of the accusing angel, whilst Mr. Flint was speaking to his sister? She could stand the shock: I was obliged to leave the room, benumbed with horror, and the weight of the whole earth resting on me! Oh! had I died *then*, what miseries should I have been spared!"

"I was brought up by good and pious parents. When poor and friendless, sick and an orphan, the first Mrs. Flint sheltered me. She gave me good wages, as well as kindness and consideration; told me, that the small-pox, though it had injured my face, had not lessened my good qualities or my good character; and as a proof of her opinion of my pru-

dence, I should be the young lady's-maid. And what was my return for her humanity, her confidence, her unexampled sweetness of temper? Oh conscience, conscience, bitter are thy recollections! *sharp are thy wounds!*"

"I was doomed to be the author of evil to my benefactors! God abandoned me to my wicked lust of money; the object of my senseless worship! What scenes of misery, of ruin, of treachery, and imposition have been aided by me!"

"I mean to pass over the period which passed after poor Mrs. Flint married Sir Murdock Maclairn. Tarefield-hall was no less fatal to her tranquillity, than to mine. But she was the victim of usurped power; I was the willing captive of sin. I still, however, bore up against conscience. I had laid out my ill-gotten gains in the purchase of this mill and land; and Mr. Flamall advised me to

rebuild, instead of repairing the south end of the house, saying I should have a nest for my old age, and be always near my good mistress. This object, for a time, filled my thoughts. It was finished, and Miss Flint's great pleasure seemed to render it comfortable. She observed, that my health declined, and with great kindness listened to my plan of quitting her service.

"I was rejoiced at this relief. In the evening my lady sent me a hamper with wine and other articles of comfort; and a box containing household linen, with a kind note. I was weary with my day's exertions, and requested the miller's wife to place the trunk of linen in my bedroom; she did so; and supported it on two chairs, in order to elevate it for my ease, when I unpacked it. I soon repaired to my bed; a glass of wine had raised my spirits. Whilst undressing myself, I felt a ray of comfort. I was my own mistress; I had a competency; and by rid-

all nature smiled; the birds raised to heaven their hymn of joy. I sunk on my knees: I endeavoured to send up a petition to infinite Mercy. *My lips* were closed and parched: *my tongue* heart *was dumb.* I wept bitterly; for my was contrite, and my soul was humbled before an offended God. Surely these tears reached the throne of grace! for kneeling as I was, with my bursting head supported by the bed, I slept peaceably till I heard the *family moving below stairs.*"

"Was this the pillow of repose for which I had given up my everlasting peace? My soul sickens at the thought! An alms-house, a cave in the earth is preferable to this abode! Let me fly to a spot where I am not known. My God is a reconcilable God: my Redeemer still liveth! The outstretched arm of infinite justice may be suspended by my repent-

uttered a piercing cry, and fell into dust. I awoke: a faint sweat bedewed my whole frame, and an oppression on my chest was for some minutes insupportable. Yet my eyelids were heavy, and again I dosed. I was now, in imagination, closed up in Mrs. Howard's coffin, and striving to put aside her mouldering bones, when a voice bade me repent and live. To this appalling admonition succeeded new terrors. I thought I was flying from my habitation, which was falling, from the convulsion of the ground, in a dreadful earthquake. I sought the hall; it was levelled to the dust. Mrs. Howard, like an angel bright in glory, stood before it. She turned towards me, and said, 'Behold! and tremble!' I started at the loudness of her voice, and the severity of her countenance. The bed trembled under me with my agitations. I dreaded to slumber again. The morning sun rose bright;

I intend to see the good Mrs. Crofts, and to say that I think the papers can be of no use; being evidently nothing more than the effects of a disturbed mind and a great depression of spirits.

CHAP. X.

LETTER XXX.

From Miss Cowley to Miss Hardcastle.

WHY, my dear Lucy, after such a dearth of intelligence from our dear Horace, did you scruple to open the budget he sent me? You could not imagine, that he could, or would fill nearly a ream of paper with his vows of unalterable love and fidelity. He well knows, that were he to conjugate the verb *aimer* with all its moods and tenses, I should look only to the present and future. *Je vous aime, et je vous aimerai,* contents me. You will find in fact that Horace understood this when he sat down to write

me a love letter; and that he wisely considered I should be better pleased with the contents of the packet which swelled his dispatches, than by the most elegant display of his talents for a tender epistle.

In the mean time he has been contending with the winds of heaven; but as I know your father has received a bulletin of his health and spirits, I shall only add, that I *am happy.*

I send you enough to compensate for the brevity of this letter; but I must caution you not to take a fancy to Mr. Oliver Flint; for, although he is in the main a good sort of *Flint,* compared with some, yet he is a rough pebble by the side of our captain: and I will not permit him to share with his brother the esteem which *he* merits. Tell my dear Mary not to be distressed about writing to me. Her letters to the good folks at the Abbey are a common banquet, except now

and then, when Alice is penurious, and only treats us with scraps. Be it so; she has rights which no one wishes to invade. Mrs. Wilson, who furnished our last treat, poured forth her blessings on Lucy Hardcastle; and with her honest face glowing with rapture, said, "Aye! never tell me that wickedness abounds in the world and if it did, one family as righteous as Mr. Hardcastle's would again save it from destruction."--Farewell.

R. COWLEY.

LETTER XXXI.

From Henry Sinclair to Horace Hardcastle, (sent by the latter to Miss Cowley, and by her inclosed, in the foregoing.)

Kingston, Jamaica.

MY DEAR SIR,

AFTER a safe and speedy passage hither, and having happily witnessed a scene of tenderness, which whilst it unmanned me, gave to my anxious heart the most complete assurance that my sister had nothing for doubts or fears, I hasten to acquit myself of my promise to you, reserving for my future leisure the particulars of Margaret's little romance. I have not seen Mr. Flamall; but enough has transpired, to satisfy me that it is better I should not see him. In the mean time, I have succeeded in gaining the good will and entire confidence of

the good old Oliver Flint. I took an opportunity when he was exulting at the prospect of Philip's happiness, and paying his assiduous court to "his Margaret," to ask her whether her head and her shoe-heels were of the same stuff; "for" added I, "the road of happiness and prosperity, though smoother than the rocks at Cintra, have made many stumble." This observation brought forwards Margaret's adventure, and your knight-errantry. With this prelude I began my questions; and I found a willing auditor. "You shall have my opinion of this matter," said Mr. Flint, wringing my hand with eagerness, "on condition that you promise me not to disturb my poor boy's comforts, nor attempt to see this uncle of his. We have done with him, Mr. Sinclair; and the arm of justice will reach him, without your aid; but let me tell you, by what means I have formed this opinion of a man, whom for

a time I respected. You need not be told my reasons for desiring my brother Philip to visit me. My last surviving hope was nearly of his age, and bore the same name. I had lost sight of my family in England; and for many years had considered this as no misfortune, having been led to conclude that the conduct of some amongst them, had proclaimed their unworthiness. My sister Lucretia was the only one of my father's children with whom I had any intercourse by letter, and she constantly mentioned this posthumous child with tenderness and promising hopes. Her adoption of him pleased me, even before I was childless myself; and as it was obvious she had an influence with his mother, I wrote to her, stating my wishes and intentions in this boy's favour. Her answer was satisfactory; but I was informed that Philip had an uncle, who claimed his rights in a child who

from his cradle had been his care and comfort; and that he intended to share with his nephew the hazards of the voyage, and the pleasure of seeing me; and in this arrangement his mother had concurred. They arrived; and I soon showed Mr. Flamall that I was satisfied with my heir. He, on his part, convincing me by his conduct, of the part he had taken in forming him for a worthy one. My friend Mr. Cowley, the father of the young lady for whom you are interested, was not less pleased with this serpent in disguise, than myself; and indeed, I know of *none* to whom his company was not acceptable. He was, or affected to be, charmed with his situation, and from certain hints and well-timed displays of his capacity for business, my friend made him very advantageous offers of employing him in the regulation of his accounts. He accepted them, and from that time resided with Mr. Cowley,

who became attached to him more and more. About this period my poor friend received his daughter's picture from England; and I was summoned to celebrate its arrival with others of his acquaintance. Curious to see the change which time had produced, on an infant I had carried in my arms many and many a time, I went at an early hour, and found poor Cowley fondly surveying it. I was struck by the beauty of the image before me; but it had recalled to poor Henry his lost wife, and he yielded without restraint to his tender regrets. I endeavoured to soothe him, and amongst other things said, that his girl pleased me, though she had his saucy eyes, adding, 'Suppose, Henry, we make up a match between us? My *boy* is as handsome as your *girl;* and he will have reason to be satisfied, if she is only half as good and as beautiful as her mother was.' 'She has my saucy eyes, you say,'

replied he, fixing his own on the picture; 'if she have my spirit also, she will wish to chuse a husband for herself; and I am very certain, she is well qualified to chuse wisely.' He continued to expatiate to Mr. Flamall, on her good fortune in having been brought up by *Mrs. Hardcastle*, and with much satisfaction continued to enumerate his daughter's various attainments, and the proofs he had in his letters from her, of good sense and discernment. This merely accidental conversation produced on Flamall's mind the first suggestions of his ambition; I have no doubt of this; for he frequently mentioned to me the advantages which would result from an alliance with my old friend; and withal intimated, that he was certain that Philip was a favourite with Mr. Cowley. Moreover, he frequently joked with us on the subject, and advised Cowley to send for his daughter. I had, however, by this

time seen enough of *my youngster*, to suspect that he was in love elsewhere. I observed, that whenever Miss Cowley's picture was the theme of praise, Philip paid his tribute of admiration as much to the *drapery* as the *face;* and that with the *young ladies*, he was more pensive, than with their *mothers*. But hourly, my dear Sir, did he gain upon my heart; for in every thought, word, and deed, he brought to my remembrance my own dear boy, the last of my mortal blessings! But let this pass: you will soon know this worthy lad. I had soon after, having given up listening to Flamall's match-making scheme, the shock of seeing Mr. Cowley seized with his first apoplectic fit at my table. He recovered from this attack; but he was a changed man. He was not insensible of his diminished strength; and his conversations frequently turned on his settling his worldly affairs, before he left me. On

an occasion of this kind, he one day in particular consulted me in relation to his two natural children. 'They are mine, Oliver,' said he with great tenderness; 'and their mother is as unconscious of evil as themselves. I have appointed them a provision and a guardian which will be a security for my honour, when I am dust. They will perceive that I was in affection *a parent*, when I thought of *you* for my substitute in duty. Tell me, have I taxed your friendship too heavily?'—'You have always been more than a match for me, Henry,' said I taking his trembling hand; 'but for once, I have the ascendency; for without consulting you, or having a doubt of your friendship, you have for years been my appointed executor, and the destined prop of those children now in heaven.' Poor fellow! he was moved to tears.—'I mean,' continued he, 'to try the effects of a change of climate. I wish to see my dear daughter before I die; I wish

to recommend to her those proofs of her father's weakness. She will be kind to my innocent Marian; and when the boys are sent to England for instruction, she will protect them as my children. I have no fears for her happiness,' continued he; 'Hardcastle will continue to watch over her safety, and I have named him and Counsellor Steadman joint executors with yourself, in all matters relative to her concerns. Hardcastle has a son,' pursued he, 'of whom my dear girl has written me *wonders*. I have good reasons for believing that the lad's romantic father has for some years banished this boy from his house, lest he should exchange hearts with my girl. I have never dropped a hint of this suspicion to any one bnt yourself; but should I live to reach England, and find this young man a *Hardcastle*, and my daughter disposed to favour him, I will see her married to him, and then die in peace

with the world and myself, as having well managed the talents given me.' This conversation finished by his repeatedly thanking me for the comfort I had given to his dejected spirits; and some short time after, he told me that he had finished his most important concerns; and should, whenever he embarked, leave Marian and her little ones under my roof; which promise had reconciled her to his voyage.

The second shock to his enfeebled frame left us little for hope. Yet he again rallied; but with the loss of all power in his legs, and with a general debility, that rendered every exertion fatiguing. He did not quit his apartment, and rarely his bed, for much time together. His faculties were notwithstanding less oppressed, than after his first attack; for he was more cheerful and equal in his spirits. During this term of his trial, how often have I heard him

bless me for being the agent in the hands of Providence, in conducting to him Mr. Flamall, who so ably went through the business he was no longer in a condition to superintend, and whose society was a comfort to him! To say the truth, I was no less pleased with his conduct than my friend; 'for this fellow's talents are up to every thing *but honesty*.'

One morning I went as usual to Cowley's; he was still in his bed, and the sun-blinds were down in the bow-windows of his spacious apartment. I stumbled on entering, from the sudden transition from light to darkness, against some moveable; and with the utmost cheerfulness, my friend said, 'Why, how now, Oliver! you are one of those 'who love darkness rather than light because your deeds are evil;' therefore take care of your shins.' 'Rubbing the one offended, I approached the bed, and then only perceived, that on a small table close to its

side, was a sheet of parchment, with pen and ink, and that Flamall had quitted his station near it to receive me. 'You are busy," observed I, thinking he was, adding a codicil to his will, for such the lessening obscurity discovered the parchment to be.—'I will call this evening.' —'I had finished, my dear Oliver,' replied he, grasping my hand. 'We have wished for your appearance; I have only to sign and seal.' He rung the bell and desired the servant to show the gentlemen into the room. His physician, with one of the most respectable men at Kingston, entered.—I retreated to the bow, and passing the blind, stood in the balcony. I heard him say something as an excuse for having so long detained them; and he added, 'I have been hearing Mr. Flamall read my will once more. I now, in a sound mind, declare it to be last will and testamentary act, which I am about to sign in your presence.' The

business was performed with all due formalities; and his faithful Juba, to whom he had given good learning when he was in England, witnessed this act of his beloved master with such emotions, that he left the room the moment he had written his name. Mr. Flamall asked him where he should deposit the will; and Cowley answered, 'in the cabinet.' The gentlemen saw him place it in the cabinet, which stood opposite to the foot of the bed, and Cowley received the key, which was attached to the chain of his watch. He now called me from my post, and for some time chatted with us At length the gentlemen departed; and Juba, recovered from his grief, entered with some refreshment for his master. 'Try and get off this key,' said Cowley to him, giving him the watch. He did so without difficulty. 'There, my dear Oliver,' said my friend, giving it me, 'you will take care of it; and I have closed my ac-

counts with this world.' We were both silent, for I could not speak. 'There is one thing,' resumed he, 'which I had like to have forgotten: you will find my wife's jewels and trinkets in that cabinet; let Rachel know I should have sent them to her long since, but that I could not bear to see them. There is a pearl necklace amongst them; her mother wore it the day she was married.' His voice sunk, and he burst into tears. 'Come, come,' said I, 'my dear fellow-sufferer, let us have no more of this; get well, and carry your daughter this necklace yourself. You will find, when placing it on her neck as a bride, that God has many comforts for you yet in store.' He shook his head.—'I trust he has,' replied he, 'but they are not in this world.' Flamall, who had left the room with the visitors, returned, and my friend changed the subject of conversation. He lived only nine days after this in-

terview. You may judge of my surprise at the contents of the will, when called upon to produce it. Mr. Flamall acted his part to the life, but with me his villany stood confessed! I need not tell you his power over poor Miss Cowley, nor Philip's surprise that he was involved in her fate. His spirits, which had visibly declined from the time he had been with me, became totally dejected, and he passed his time here in solitude. I was certain he had the same suspicions with myself; and, although it went to my heart to vex him, I determined to open my mind to him: I did so by relating to him all I have told you; and I added, that if he preferred going to England, I would go with him and leave Flamall 'to the devil's care.'—'I have no wish to return to England,' answered he with emotion 'I wish to die here, and would this hour resign my breath willingly were it not for you!' The poor boy clung to my

bosom, and wept bitterly.—'Well,' said I, 'we now understand one another. I would sooner see you dead than Miss Cowley's husband: but you may be her *friend; we also will try to be cunning.* Flamall is your uncle; so much the worse for you, and the better for him, according to the estimation of danger. We will leave him to an arm which will, in its own time, reach him to his cost. Show some alacrity in the post your uncle has assigned you, and be vigilant over *accounts* which relate to the heiress he has gained for you. Inventories will not be marriage articles, Philip, but they may be evidences of what Miss Cowley is worth. She may like you as an honest man, though not as a suitor forced upon her. We do not want her money, but Mr. Flamall does; and if he finds he cannot have it one way he will try another.' Philip entered into my views; he worked like a negro in Flamall's office for

Miss Cowley, but complained bitterly that his uncle persecuted him daily on the subject of the marriage, and highly resented his reluctance to the voyage to England. About this time the partner of an old and respectable house of correspondence I had in London, arrived here. He met Flamall at my table, for I was a *cunning man* you will observe, and preserved appearances on many accounts. The stranger, before he quitted me, asked me how long I had known Flamall. I answered; adding that he was nearly related to my brother Philip. 'I should be sorry for the young gentleman,' replied he, 'were I not assured that I must have heard a false representation of Mr. Flamall's conduct in England.' I urged him to explain himself; he evaded for a time my enquiries, saying that he had only common report to produce as an apology for *wondering* at seeing Flamall *in good company*, and in an

honourable station of *trust;* but," added he, "I am safe with you; I have heard that he *writes too well,* therefore take care of him, my good old friend." I smiled and shook his hand: we understood each other. Well! I am making this a long story! but now for the conclusion. One evening Philip returned from Kingston so ill that I thought he was dying. I say nothing of what passed in my mind. Here was my last hope within sight of the grave! He grew better, however, towards the morning, and the doctor told me his disorder was not the cruel fever which had made me childless. Philip was moved to see my distress, and he at once told me that he did not deserve my love and goodness, for that he had been afraid to trust me. He then told me all about his marriage with that poor little girl of ours, and the roguery which that d——d Flamall had practised to make him believe she was a

faithless baggage. He had met Miss Lindsey by chance at his friend Dalrymple's, where he had persuaded Flamall to place the two little Cowleys and their mother; and, as you may suppose, poor Margaret's innocence was cleared up. It was well Flamall was then beyond my reach! He was at the large plantation, twenty miles from hence; so instead of shooting him through the head I employed my time in getting my poor boy well; and a contented mind hastened his cure. I shall never forget what passed in my mind when this *affectionate*, and very *anxious* uncle came on the wings of the wind to see his "dear Philip!" I met him, however, with my *cunning face* in the hall, and told him the patient was doing well, for he was asleep; and he followed me into the eating room. A thousand questions ensued, which were all answered by assuring him that he was in the road to better health than he

had enjoyed for many months."—"We must part with him," observed he, "Jamaica will be the ruin of his constitution: he was never robust."—"Oh!" replied I, gaily, "he will do very well here when he has his wife."—"He will never have her," returned he, "by remaining here: Miss Cowley must be better wooed to be won."—"We will leave Miss Cowley to be wooed by those suiters who are nearer to her," answered I, "and be contented to receive the wife who has been villified, and it may be ruined in health as well as in peace, *by treachery*." He began to storm. "You had better be quiet," said I, "and thank fortune you are Lady Maclairn's brother: as for mine, within yonder, he is my care, not yours: I will provide for his happiness without delay, and only by signing Oliver Flint, do more to effect it than you have done with your *penmanship*. I have seen you, Mr. Flamall, for the last time, *for I know*

you. When Philip is well enough to be *disturbed*, without risk, he shall wait upon you if you please, and introduce to you *Mrs. Lindsey*, who wishes to send a letter to her good friend, *Doctor Maccleod*, whom she finds, to her *surprise*, you correspond with, *although he is in Heaven.*" I thought the fellow would have dropped at my feet! I never saw a man *so cut down!* "You will call for what you want," said I, retreating, "I will send a servant to you; but my brother shall not see you to-day."

He followed me, without uttering a word, and, mounting his horse, left the house. Poor Philip, who is the most affectionate of creatures, was vexed when I told him of this visit. He wrote to his uncle, who sent back the letter, and quitted the creek plantation. He resides now at the other, and lives like an angry lion in his lair. "Philip will tell you all the particulars of this villany," added

he, rising to meet him and Lindsey. "Be sure to advise him not to regard this fellow's stubborn pride; he has been too humble with him, in my opinion, but his mother's peace is always uppermost, and I cannot bear to see him uneasy, so I never name Flamall."

Thus far, my dear Sir, you have seen Mr. Flamall as the *guardian*, the *friend*, and the *relative*. I leave to you to draw your own conclusions; but as the detention of the vessel permits me, I will continue my history by informing you that they have amongst them made a fool, to say no worse of your friend, of Henry Sinclair.

I perceived in Margaret's face a degree of anxiety and confusion whenever she saw me look serious. Our party, the following day, was augmented by two families, who came, in great form, to pay the bride, as they called my sister, their compliments, and to plague us with their

ceremonious intrusion. I was in no humour for such company, and, pleading a head-ach, I kept close in my own apartment. Thus retired, I had just finished my solitary dinner when Lindsey entered the room; and, sitting down, commended my prudence and good fortune in escaping the people who were yet in the house. "I can do no more for Philip," added he, yawning, "and it may do him good if they teach him that no happiness here is permanent." I made no reply. "I find," continued Lindsey, "it is exactly as my wife had foreseen, you have taken offence, and Philip's caution is misconstrued. I will follow her counsels, for I have never had reason yet to repent of so doing. Listen to me, and then be angry if you please. During your brother's voyage hither his uncle informed him that he had long known of his *intrigue* with Miss Sinclair. Lecture followed exhortation, and exhortation lecture: the unrepenting sin-

ner kept his secret, and listened in patience. One letter from *Miss Sinclair*, enclosed in one from Montrose, reached poor Philip soon after his arrival here; and the reception he met with from his brother cheered his drooping spirits. At length his intelligence from Scotland failed; and his uncle gave him seriously to understand that Mr. Cowley wished to secure him for a husband for his daughter. Philip endeavoured to laugh at his uncle's having taken up a few random jokes as a premeditated design, but this evasion failing, he firmly told him that his affections were engaged, and that his honour, without other motives, would oblige him to refuse even Miss Cowley's offered hand. "I would have spared you, Sir," replied Mr. Flamall, with sternness, "the pain of blushing before a man whose authority you have of late cast off, although from the hour of your birth he has lived for the purpose

of making you a reasonable being. I had hoped to have seen you long since reclaimed from the weakness and infatuation of a boy deluded by his vanity and passions; but I see you require harsher remedies than mine since you have found your path to fortune smooth. Read that letter, and then judge of the nature of those engagements which your delicate honour opposes to a situation the most enviable." He threw a letter on the table, and abruptly left the room. Philip found that it was one from his college tutor, Doctor Macleod, to his uncle; and, from its contents, it appeared that the discovery of his attachment to your sister had been made by him to Mr. Flamall; for, after his approbation of the measures which Mr. Flamall had pursued of removing the lover from so dangerous a predicament, he proceeds in detailing the conduct of the deserted fair one. "This imprudent girl," writes the good

Doctor, " soon supplied Mr. Flint's absence by admitting the visits of *a new lover*. He was more experienced in the wiles of the sex, of her class at least; and, being an independent man, of considerable fortune, she was prevailed upon to quit her mother, and to place herself under his protection at his seat near Dublin, without the name of a wife. I am told that Montrose, her *first lover*, shares with her in the generosity of her gallant; and that he is in Dublin, and supported by this unhappy girl. Mrs. Sinclair has left Edinburgh. Mrs. Montrose did not, at her death, leave sufficient to pay her debts. No wonder: her daughter is somewhere in service: I hope it is an honest one. When your nephew learns these particulars he will be convinced of the danger he has escaped, for he wants not understanding; nor will his gratitude fail in the acknowledgments due to those who, from their interest in his wel-

fare, have providentially saved him from pain." "This letter," added Lindsey, "finished with latin, and cautions Mr. Flamall not to forget that the assumed mask of *a Miss Sinclair*, and the designing friendship of *a Montrose*, had been the destruction of men much more experienced in life than his nephew, &c.—Philip's state of mind, on perusing this letter, was such as I shall not attempt to describe. In the confusion and tumult of his thoughts he crushed it in his hand, and putting it into his bosom he left Flamall's house. He wrote to me: no answer was returned. He then wrote to a young man for general information, respecting his old friends, *the Montroses* and *Miss Sinclair*. To this letter he had a reply. It was such as confirmed, in part, his tutor's intelligence; for the death of Mrs. Montrose had broken up her little family, and the writer knew not where her son and daughter were.

"Mrs. Sinclair and her pretty daughter had left Edinburgh." In the interim I reached this place with my wife; and my friend, on whom I relied for my present establishment, placed us in the house of our countryman, Mr. Dalrymple, till all was ready for our final settlement at his plantation. You may judge that my Fanny had formed her designs in favour of her injured friend, and she was not long without information in regard to Mr. Flint's situation and favour with his rich brother Oliver. She listened to his praises, and the Dalrymples were not sparing of them. His conduct in his visits to the Cowleys and their mother; his friendship to themselves, entered into these details; and, finally, the disappointment of certain young ladies who were said to be in love with the handsome stranger, who was soon to return to England to marry the great heiress, Miss Cowley. You will imagine the in-

terview my wife so ardently desired was not long delayed; and without entering into her reproaches or Philip's distress, I will finish my narrative by telling you, that Doctor Macleod's friendly epistle and fatherly advise, was dated *just six months after his death.* The result was much happier than my poor wife had reason to expect, for she had nearly been the death of Philip in her indiscreet zeal for friendship. We are all at present in the right road," continued Lindsey, " and happy; but in our apprehensions of your warmth; for Flamall is without importance to us."—" I must see him," replied I, " were it only to thank him for all his good intentions. It will not, I presume, disturb the peace of the world, if I should improve Mr. Flamall's art of ' writing letters from the dead to the living,' or be taught by him the secret road to my old friend Macleod." — " This is what your poor sister fears," said Lindsey, " and

which is the poison in the cup of poor Philip's present blessings. He cannot speak to you on this delicate subject." "I do not now wish he should," answered I, with warmth, "but by the ——:" I was interrupted by the entrance of the bewitching widow, who with a smile turning to Lindsey, asked him, if he had explained to me the wishes of my friends. Lindsey made no answer. But I will hasten over my defeat. All I know is, that I was subdued by her tears and pathetic representation of the misery I should introduce, by my noticing this rascal. And so well did she plead the cause of mercy and forbearance, that I do not think I could have shot at a sparrow whilst within hearing of her voice. "Promise me," said the syren, "promise me, Mr. Sinclair, that you will leave this miserable man to the upbraidings of his own conscience. Indeed you are not made for a murderer; nor does this guilty wretch need your blood to condemn him to a heavier pu-

nishment than that which now hangs over him; he is forlorn and dejected; and the prey of that remorse and disappointment which his conduct has produced. Shall I tell your *brother*? Shall I tell Margaret, that you will take no steps to interrupt their peace?" "You may," answered I, seizing her hand, "and if I am deemed a poltroon, you must defend me." She blushed and withdrew as abruptly as she had entered. My pacific intentions have cleared Philip's brow of care. We have had several conversations on the subject of his uncle's late conduct. I am assured that Mr. Cowley could not have found a better agent than this man, for his purpose, as far as related to business. He is acute, active, and regular in his employment; and Philip believes, that the same pride which had nearly been his destruction, will keep him *just* in regard to Miss Cowley's property. He is persuaded that Flamall will be miserable, till he is again on

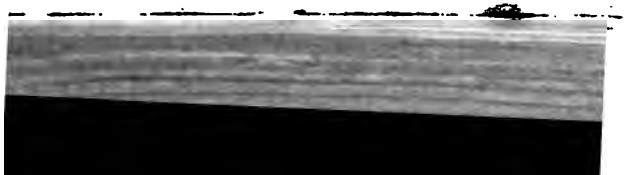
good terms with him; and he strenuously endeavours to convince me, that his uncle's deviations from honour and integrity may be traced to his unbounded affection for him, and an ambition which, though without excuse in some points, has been vigilantly employed for his benefit in many. "I cannot," added my brother, "*cancel* from my memory the numberless proofs he has given me of even parental anxiety and care; and I will make every concession to his pride that may tend to a reconciliation; for I know he loves me; and he is wretched. As a man and a christian, this is my duty; as the brother of Lady Maclairn, and the instructor of my youth, he has claims on my heart; and I yet hope to see him restored to himself, and the good opinion of the world." I had nothing to say to arguments of this kind: *Philip Flint* is not *Henry Sinclair;* but it is ten to one that he is the happiest

and the wisest man of the two. I must try what wedlock will make of me; for I begin to suspect I want smoothing and trimming. I still feel that the current of resentment would carry me down to the creek plantation, for the sole purpose of kicking this uncle to Margaret's feet. Mrs. Dormer, my fair enslaver, keeps a watchful eye over me, and what with balls, feasts, and her smiles, I am a lost man, though yet a steady friend; and if you give the word of command I will kidnap Flamall, and send him to you for the recompence of his deserts.

Yours, most faithfully,

HENRY SINCLAIR.

P. S. I have not room for my sisters prayers for Mr. Hardcastle's and Miss Cowley's felicity.

END OF VOL. II.

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